Interview
Daniel Clarke

Articles
Sketchbook of **Daniele Montella**

The Gallery
Francisco Albert Albusac
Andreas Rocha, plus more!

Cover Image By Serge Birault

STYLIZING
PIN-UP GIRLS
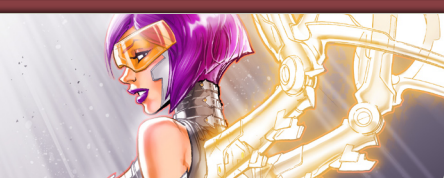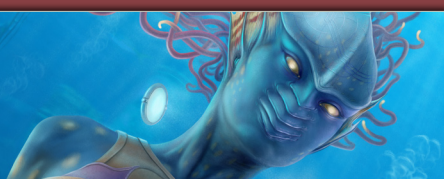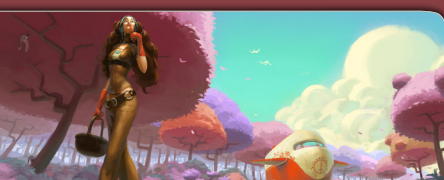
Serge Birault kicks starts a brand new series showing us how to create gorgeous stylized pin-ups.

Art Fundamentals
David Smit provides both the inspiration and advice in this months Art Fundamentals tutorial looking at depth and perspective.

Photoreal Fantasy
Tiziano Baracchi is this month's Photoreal tutor and he shows us how he painted his underwater alien.

Mastering Comic Art
David Nakayama concludes his ground-breaking series by talking us through how he adds color to his outstanding line work.

Editorial

Hello and welcome to the 65th 2DArtist! We hope you all had a great April. We definitely enjoyed it here in the UK, bank holidays left right and centre and a strategically placed Royal Wedding have given us a nice selection of days off to enjoy the sunny weather, and lap up the inspirational English countryside. This month's magazine has to top the weather for inspiration however as we are full to the brim with outstanding content and jaw dropping tutorials!

We will kick off by this month by talking about this month's cover image. Every different CG site and forum is full of artists that seem obsessed with one thing, Pin-ups! We have for a long time considered making a tutorial about Pin-up art but have been waiting for the right man for the job. Our patience has paid off and this month's issue contains the first chapter in **Serge Birault's** definitive guide to digital Pin-ups. Serge is a Pin-up legend and he starts the series by showing us how to design and paint a military character. Serge also gives us an insight into the way he paints by showing us how he builds up layers with an airbrush in different layer modes. This is a great series and we are very grateful to Serge for finding time in his schedule to do it for us.

The Art Fundamentals series has been great so far. Our elite artists have been demonstrating priceless tips to help us ensure our images cover all of the necessary bases. In this issue we are in the more than capable hands of **David Smit**. David talks us through creating the effect of depth in your image. David has a great way of explaining things and is an outstanding artist, you are going to love looking at his work and I am sure like me you will laugh your way through his tutorial.

David Nakayama has been nothing short of fantastic as he has talked us through our first guide to comic art. In this issue David wraps up his series by telling us how to add the color to our beautifully designed comic images. David's advice is priceless as it has been throughout this series and we thank him for all of his help. In next month's issue we move on to Painting Tribal Warriors!

Our realistic fantasy series has been throwing up a huge variety of tips and styles and this issue is no exception. **Tiziano Baracchi** talks us through how he created his realistic looking underwater alien.

Wow! I'm running out of space fast, I will use the little that's left to tell you that it is well worth reading our interview with **Daniel Clarke** and checking out his diverse and unique portfolio. Also worth a peek is our sketchbook featuring cool character sketches by **Daniele Montella** and of course our making of by **Tiago da Silva**. The gallery is also filled with awesome works by the likes of **Sergey Musin**, **Kashubo Ivan** and **Andreas Rocha** just to name a few.

What a cool issue! I will leave you with a question that has just popped up in the office here at 3DTotal. Why is toilet roll scented? Any ideas? Let me know at **simon@3dtotal.com**.

Get the most out of your Magazine!

If you're having problems viewing the double-page spreads that we feature in this magazine, follow this handy little guide on how to set up your PDF reader!

Setting up your PDF reader

For optimum viewing of the magazine it is recommended that you have the latest Acrobat Reader installed.

You can download it for free here: DOWNLOAD!

To view the many double-page spreads featured in 2DArtist magazine, you can set the reader to display 'two-up', which will show double-page spreads as one large landscape image:

1. Open the magazine in Reader;

2. Go to the View menu, then Page display;

3. Select Two-up Continuous, making sure that Show Cover Page is also selected.

Contributing Artists

Every month many artists around the world contribute to **3DCreative** and **2DArtist** magazines. Here you can find out a bit more about them! If you would like to be a part of **3DCreative** or **2DArtist** magazine, please contact: simon@3dtotal.com
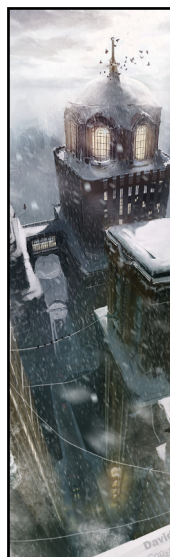
David Smit

When not traveling or working overseas, David resides in Amsterdam, freelancing in concept art, illustration and art direction jobs. It's only when he sleeps that he's not busy! He is always on the search for great projects, opportunities, stories, good music, and a nice cold beer.

http://www.davidsmit.com/
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Tiziano Baracchi

Tiziano Baracchi is an Italian free-lancer. He painted for fifteen years in acrylics and oils before turning to digital art in 2006. Soon after he started working in the gaming industry, painting for Fantasy Flight Games, Prall Multimedia, LightCon Media, Claymore Entertainment and Alephtar Games.

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eginardus@hotmail.com
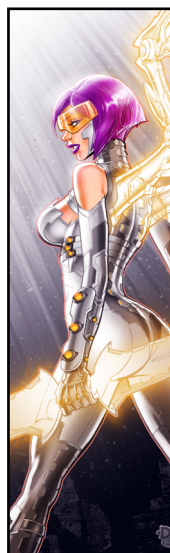
David Nakayama

In his 8 years as a professional illustrator, David Nakayama has worked extensively in the concept art, comic book, and package art fields for the likes of NCsoft, Disney, Marvel Comics, and others. He's currently Lead Concept Artist at Paragon Studios (developers of City of Heroes) and served as Art Lead during the production of the game's 2nd major boxed expansion, City of Heroes: GOING ROGUE.

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Interview | Daniel Clarke

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Daniel Clarke is a self-taught artist living
and working in Cape Town, South Africa.
He has been working in the concept art and
illustration field for the past four years and is currently
a production designer at Triggerfish Animation Studios.
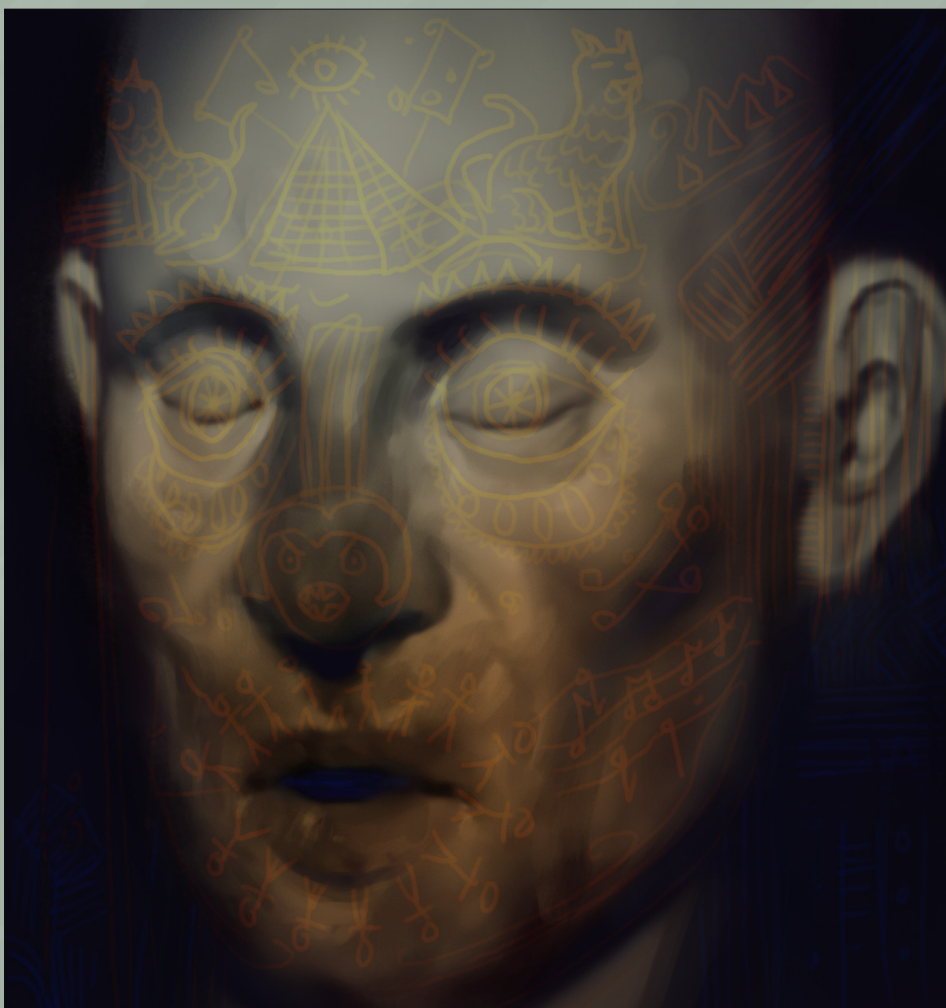
DANIEL CLARKE

"My time working in film has taught
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Interview with Daniel Clarke

Hi Daniel. Thanks for taking the time out to do this interview. First, could you tell us about your background, as it would be really interesting to know how you started off and what got you here as an artist and illustrator?

After high school I was determined to make a career for myself in fine art (oil painting). I was not very successful and found myself a bit disillusioned with the whole gallery/fine art scene. At about the same time I was discovering concept art/commercial art, where the artists were required to have an understanding of the fundamentals: color, composition, light, anatomy, design etc. This respect for the "craft" of art appealed to me a great deal. So for the last four years or so I have been trying to make it as an artist in the entertainment industry.

Your paintings are very strong and expressive – I particularly like the portraitures in your portfolio. Some of them remind me of the works of the modern artists and some look quite contemporary. Are you influenced by any particular fine artist(s)?

Yes definitely, too many to list. But if I were to name two artists who have probably had the most significant influence on me it would be Lucian Freud and Phil Hale.

Amazing artists, I really admire their expertise in figurative and portraiture painting, although I find some of their images quite disturbing! With your tight schedule, do you still manage to find some time away from your computer to do some traditional paintings or are you now completely devoted to your job and digital art?

Yes, unfortunately I do work almost completely digitally these days; it just makes a lot of sense because of the sort of time restrictions I work with. For a recent project at work, I did manage to do most of my character design work with

pencil and paper, which I find much more comfortable than drawing digitally. Oil painting is also definitely something I would like to get back to at some point.

There is always a narrative in your illustrations and artworks; do you begin your paintings based on a story? How does it work for you?
It is funny that you should say that, because I have always found the narrative aspect of painting to be the most difficult to achieve and a weakness in my work. I find I often want to get down to the business of "painting", of pushing colors around the canvas and just playing with

tone and color before I have decided what it is exactly I want to say with the piece. My time working in film has taught me to be much more conscious of the "story" in every image I produce though. The visual elements of a film need to work in service of the story, and I think that principal can be carried over to most visual arts.

> **"I am pretty open to whatever comes my way, but with the long term goal of focusing more on my own work"**

But it seems that working on stories and in the film industry has brought that element into your paintings. What's your workflow like when you're working on a project, whether it is for a client or it is personal?
Well it varies a lot. For personal work – perhaps in reaction to my paid work – I tend to work very instinctively, never knowing where a painting is taking me. I might start with one idea and end with something completely unrelated and different. With professional work it helps to have a clear idea, which you have discussed with the client/director beforehand, so that both parties know what is expected. There should, of course, always be room to play and explore.

It's a relief to know I am not the only one who starts with an idea and ends up with an image miles away from the original one! **Now you are currently working at Triggerfish Animation Studios – how do you find it working in there? Do you work mainly as a character designer or you are also specialized in the animation aspects of it?**
I have found the experience to be very interesting and educational. I had never worked

with anyone before Triggerfish, only freelance and gallery work. So to be working together with 70 – 80 people on a large project like a feature film was quite a change. I actually started out doing storyboards for them, and then moved to the texture department and had a lot of fun texturing characters in ZBrush. We didn't have a matte painter so I took on that responsibility too. I also produced the color keys, which the lighting artists use as reference, and learned a lot about story-telling using color and light in the process. In October last year I finished up on *Zambezia* (the first film) and started work as Production Designer on Triggerfish's second feature *Khumba*.

Wow, you've had quite an adventurous time there! I suppose that's given you a wide insight into what making a 3D feature film involves, but what do you really prefer to work on: 3D or 2D?
In my mind it's not really the medium that matters but rather what you do with it. Be it 2D, 3D, stopmotion, comic books, films or computer games, ultimately the goal is to make interesting images that tell a story.

Are you working on any exciting projects at Triggerfish at the moment that you could tell us about?
Triggerfish has been in pre-production on its second animated feature, *Khumba* for the past five months and I have been having a great time working with the director and a bunch of other talented artists in coming up with its look and design.

"Having a goal and tenaciously pursuing it is the only real way to improve"

That sounds like a really interesting project to be involved with. What do you suggest to the artists who do not have this opportunity to work in big companies or on big projects? How can they improve their skills and their experiences in the digital world?
I think that due to the internet it is becoming much easier to get yourself out there and be exposed to so much world-class art and educational information. Having a goal and tenaciously pursuing it is the only real way to

improve, even if you don't reach it or change direction mid-way, it's always good to be focused on what you want to do with your art, but never to the point where you are no longer enjoying it. That wasn't very helpful was it?!

"At the moment I am just trying to learn as much as possible, as quickly as possible"

[Laughs] Well, it is always interesting and useful to hear what professional artists suggest to newcomers. You currently live in South Africa; do you find it inspiring? In what ways do you think location can affect your art?

Cape Town, with all its mountains and beaches, is definitely a beautiful place to live and I am sure it affects my art in some way, but more

significantly than the place I think are the people in it. Luckily I have a very supportive family and a great group of friends and co-workers.

What is your next big challenge in your career as an artist and do you have any specific thoughts or plans for the future?

I think at the moment I am just trying to learn as much as possible, as quickly as possible. So I am pretty open to whatever comes my way, but with the long term goal of focusing more on my own work, telling my own stories and hopefully being able to make a living from it!

Daniel Clarke

For more information please visit:

http://www.danielclarkeart.com/

Or contact them at:

dansartroom@yahoo.com

Interviewer: **Layla Khani**

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"You can't draw humans if you do not know anatomy. I studied it at school but, continued to study/draw anatomy by myself for years"

SKETCHBOOK
OF DANIELE MONTELLA

This month's sketchbook gives us an insight in to the mind of Daniele Montella, and shows us a great variety of styles and subject matter. Daniele has a really versatile style and that shines through in this diverse and interesting sketchbook.

SKETCHBOOK OF DANIELE MONTELLA

My passion for drawing drives me to try many different styles and subjects. I like to draw monsters and creatures, strange men or sexy girls. I like science fiction, fantasy, realistic and cartoony styles. Usually everything is from my imagination. This page is a good example (**Fig.01**).

This is an example of my realistic/cartoony style (**Fig.02**). I love this style because it gives me great freedom of expression. I can exaggerate proportions, shapes and expressions. The goal is to be able to put a little bit of irony in my drawing.

Fig.03 is a page full of drawings in different stages of completion. Often I like to draw quickly, with as few strokes as possible to put my ideas on paper before they vanish. You can easily see the construction lines under my figures; they are necessary to draw proportionate and three-dimensional figures.
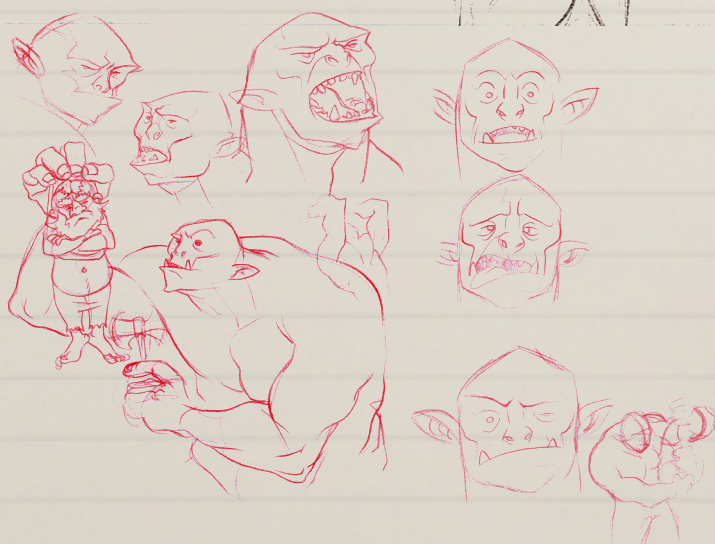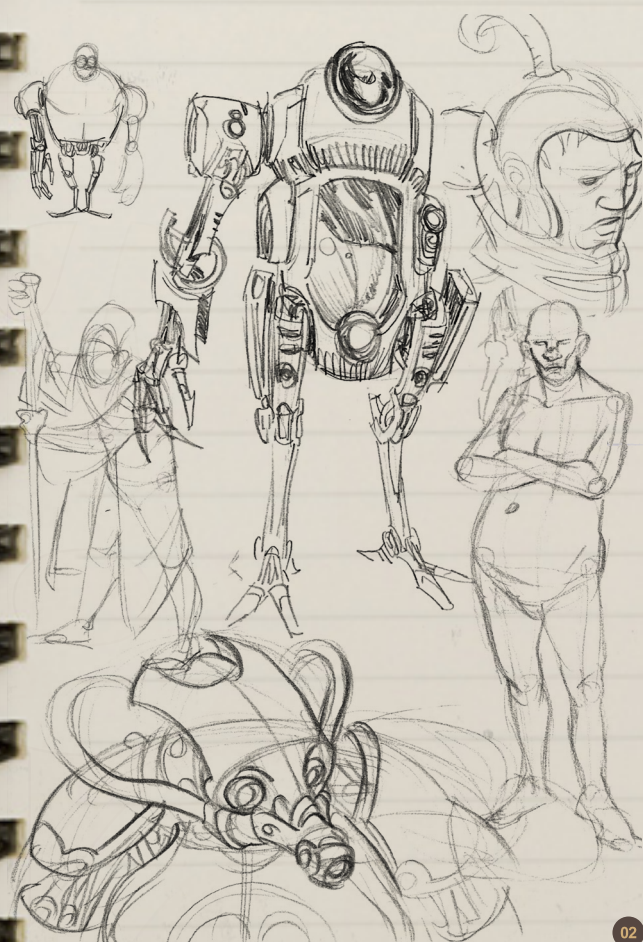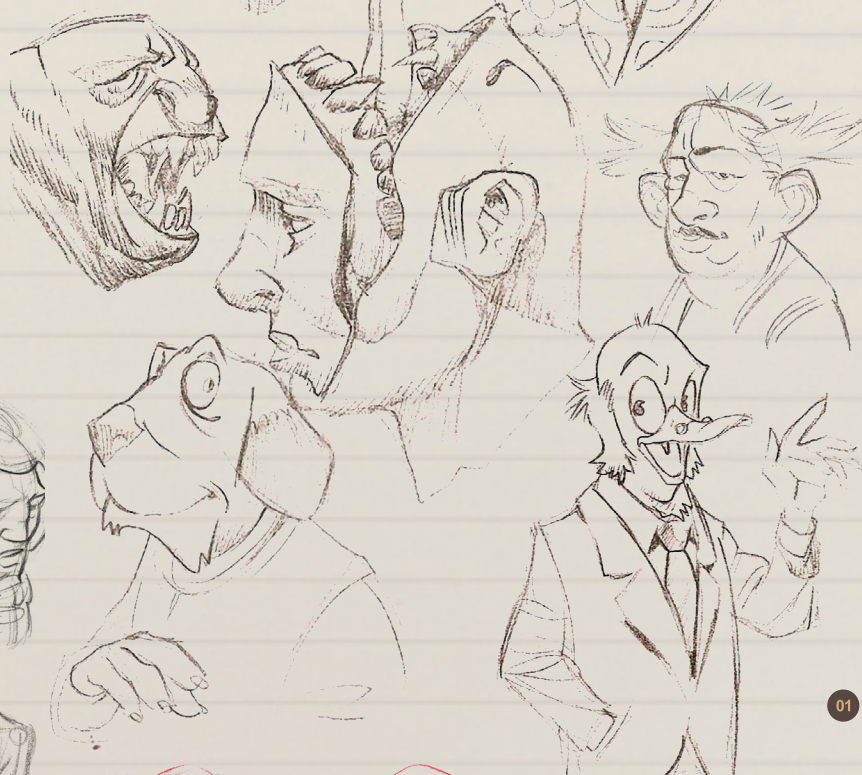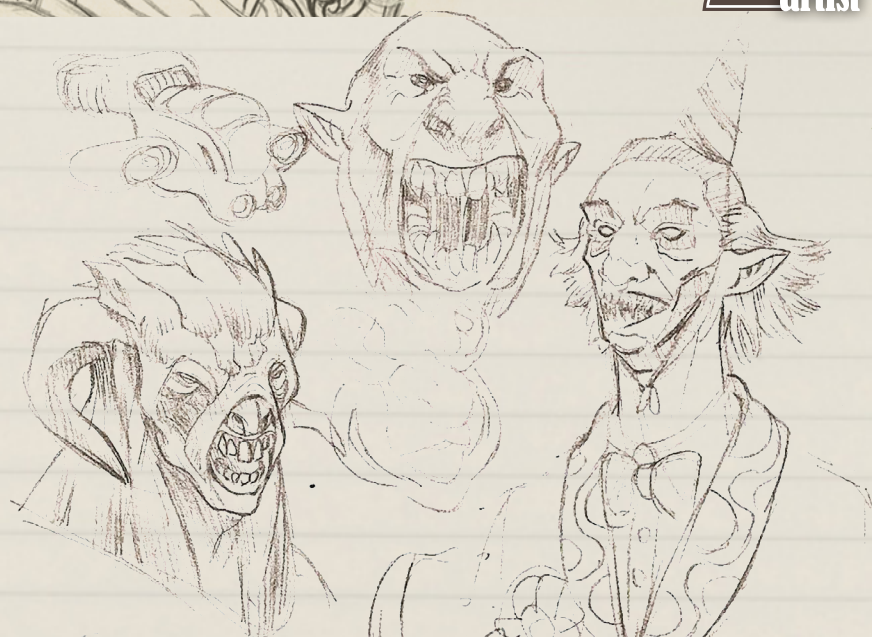
Here are a couple of pages from my 2010 Moleskin that I particularly like. When I find a good subject I like to push the drawing to a level slightly higher than a simple sketch. In this case I played with the contrasts to better describe the volumes (**Fig.04**).

Trying different tools and colors is really fun in a sketchbook (**Fig.05**). Red pencil is perfect for a quick light sketch and you can add the details with blue. The red lines are more comfortable when you add detail or trace with a pen. I sometimes use dry and Magic Markers, for graphic elements or outlines.

04

OH MY....

J3. MAGGIO 10

BLUE

05
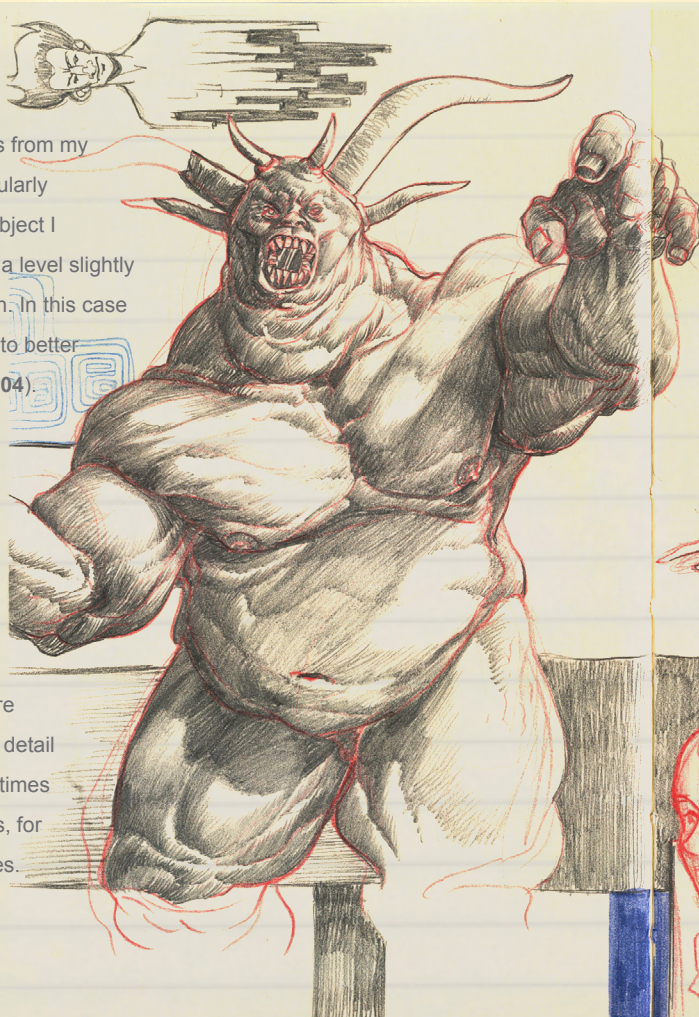
This page was drawn with a black and red marker (**Fig.06**). I love to play with black and white, using positive and negative areas to bring out shapes. I like doing this because of my love for comics!

You can't draw humans if you do not know anatomy (**Fig.07**). I studied it at school but, continued to study/draw anatomy by myself for years. I have pages and pages of it. When you trace lines with pencil it's great to discover forms and volumes of a body, and be able to give it the right weight and pose. In this case I pushed the forms a little more than normal to create a more powerful figure.

I'm absolutely mad for steampunk! I love spending time drawing gears, joints, tubes, rivets and screws (**Fig.08**). I have thousands of photo references of steam engines, old locomotives, and Victorian clothes and props. I put it together and create strange robots, vehicles, and so on... is there anything more fun than this?
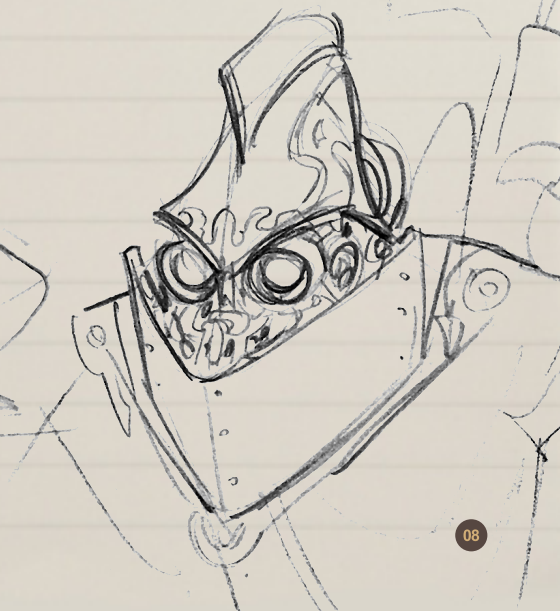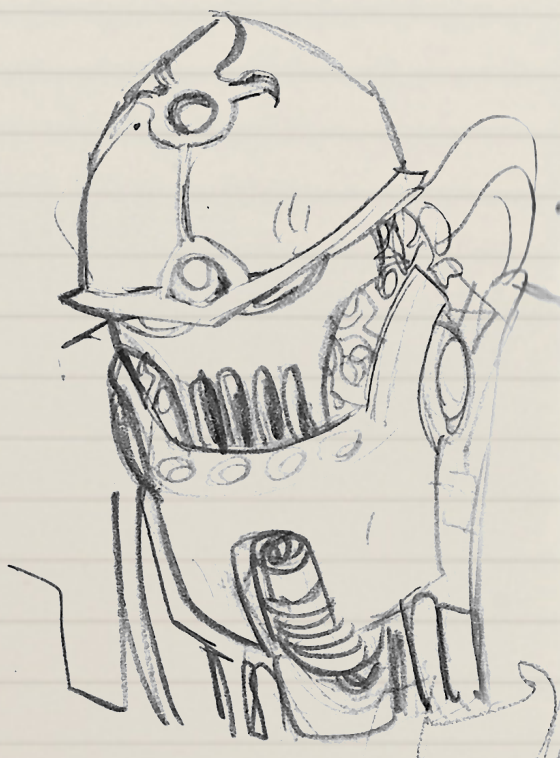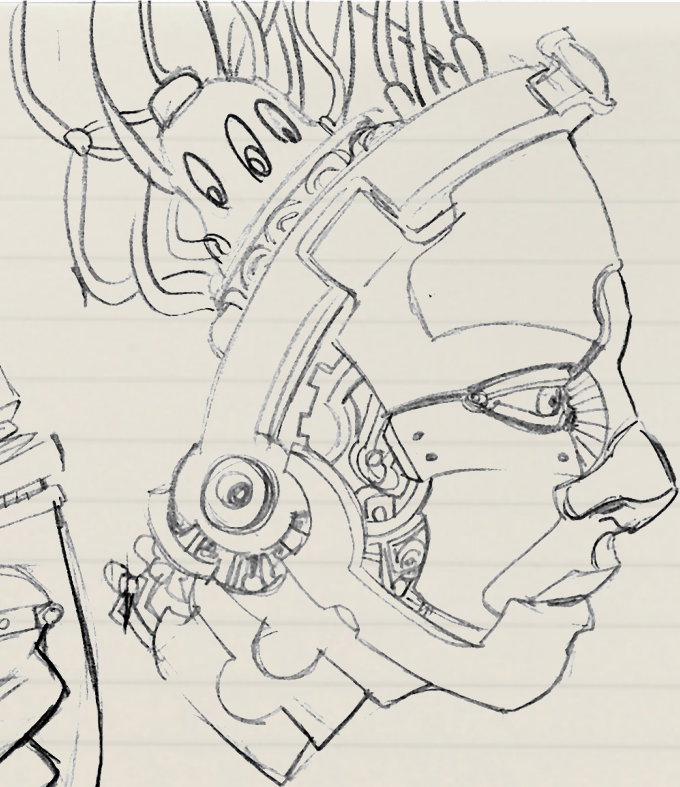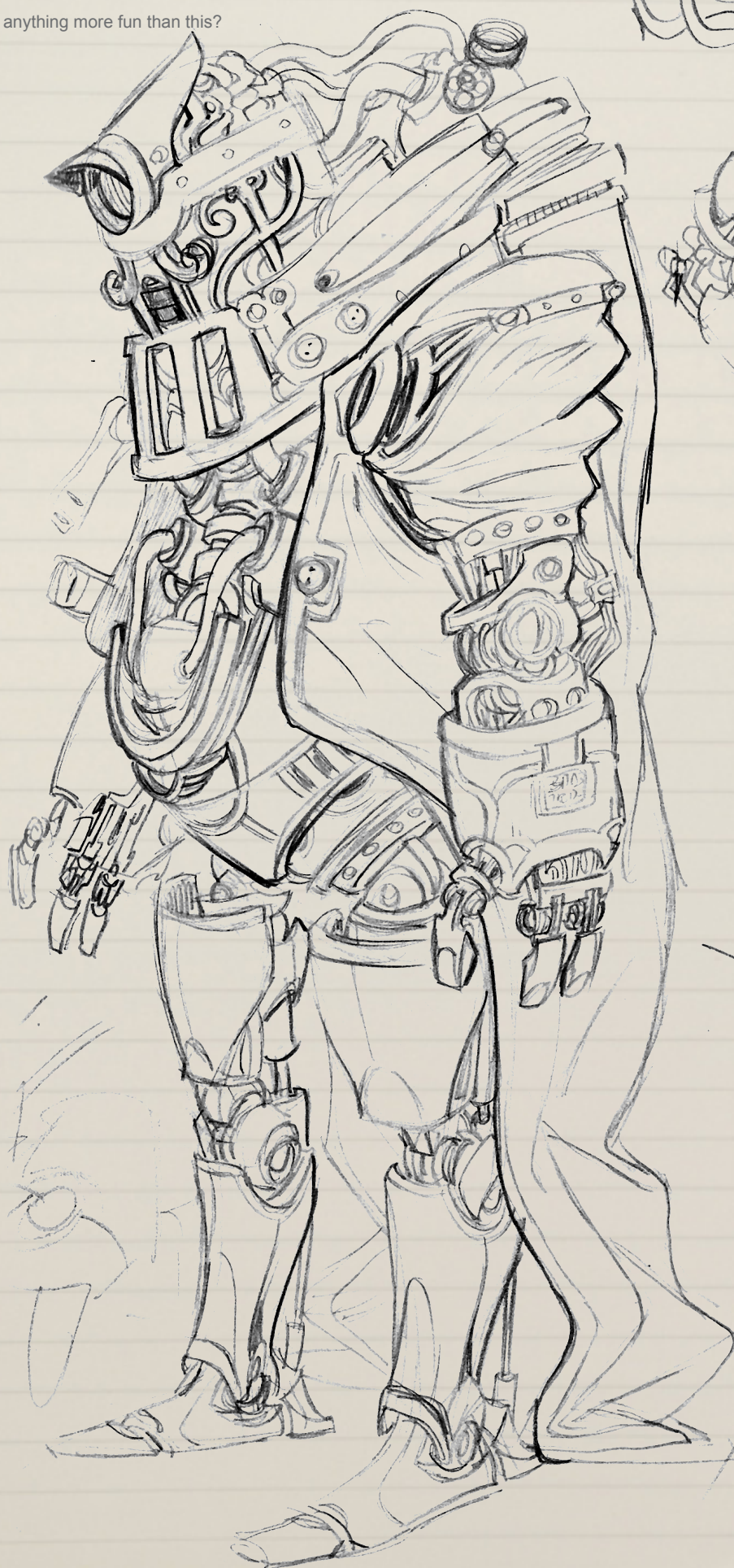
Here is another example of a page featuring miscellaneous subjects (**Fig.09**). Here I enjoyed using a grease pencil, which is almost like a charcoal. The result is a warm effect with strong contrast between light and shadows, with loose and soft lines.

The ultimate goal for an illustrator is to tell something
trough his drawing (**Fig.10**). I usually try to do that.
Sometime it's not so easy, but all those who see this page
tell me that the fat guy is definitely saying something sad
about himself and his life, and this was my intention, so I'm
happy to hear it works.
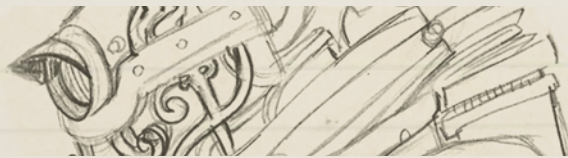
A sexy girl with a gun and some weird characters… a nice pairing (**Fig.11**). Being an illustrator is definitely a tough job! I remember I drew this page during the train ride home from work. I commuted to work for 13 years; it wasn't great, but I could draw two hours a day for years, and it was an extraordinary exercise. It helped make my drawings more confident!
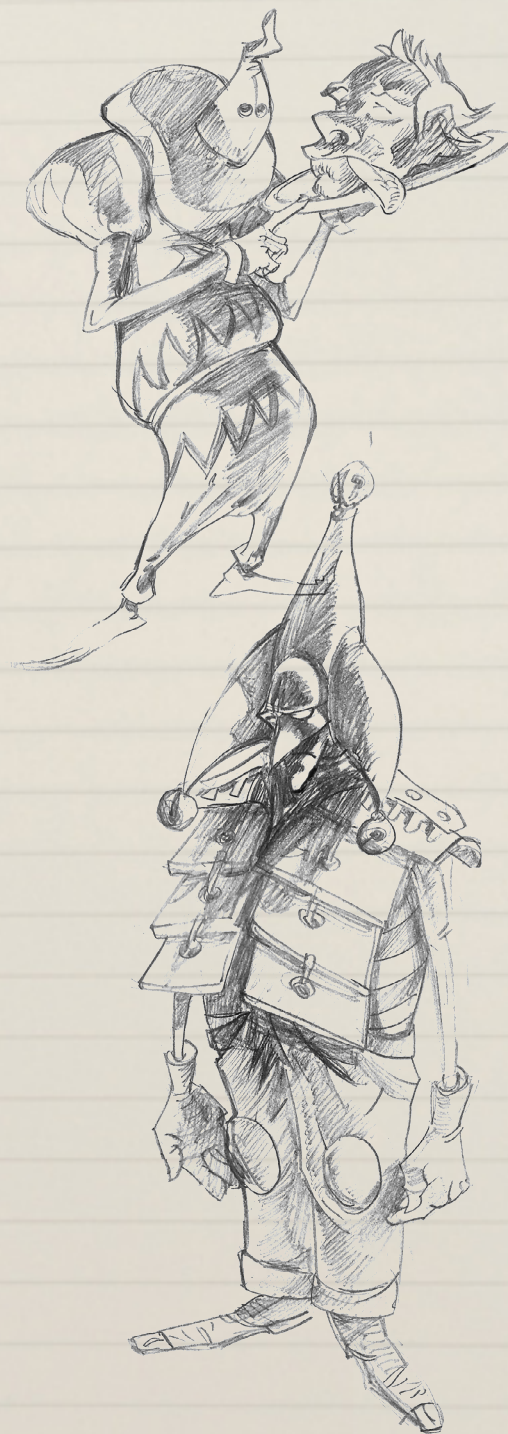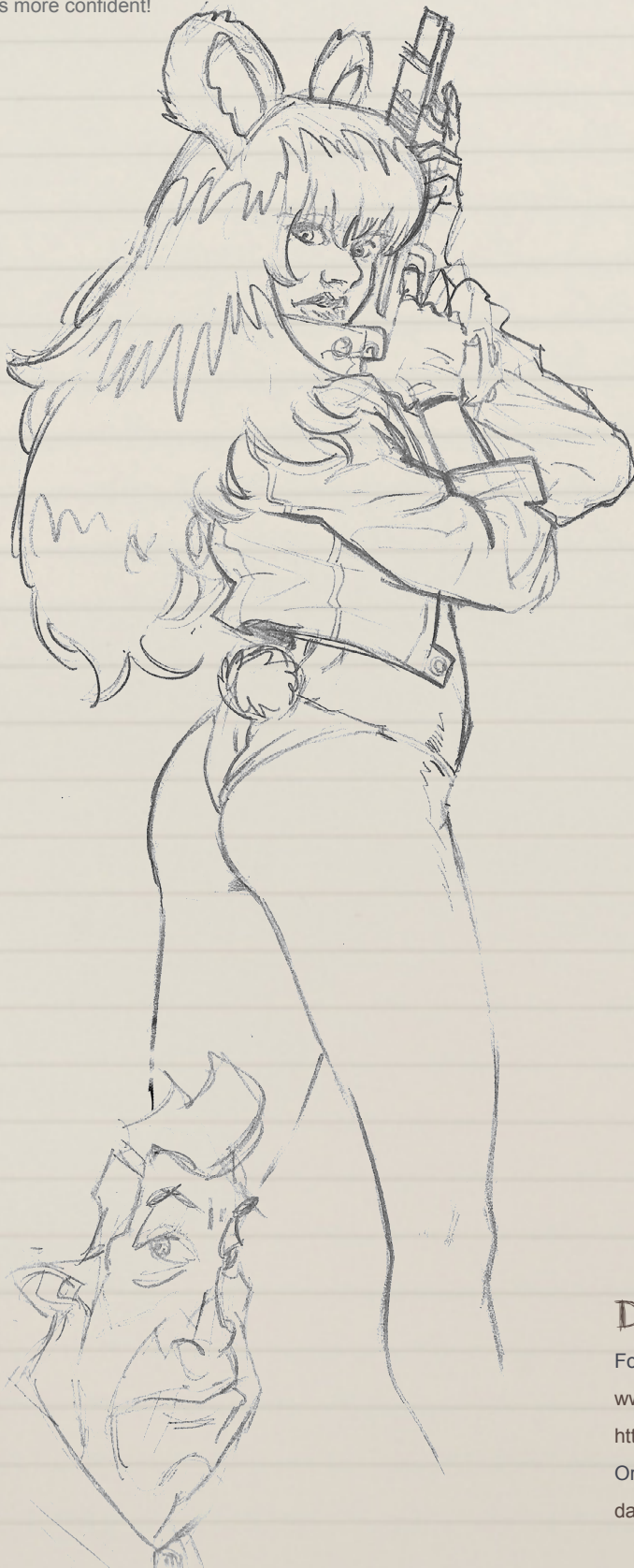
DANIELE MONTELLA

For more information please visit:

www.dan-ka.com

http://dan-ka-boom.blogspot.com/

Or contact them at:

danka@dan-ka.com

– the Gallery

This month we feature:

Rudy-Jan Faber

Francisco Albert Albusac

Andreas Rocha

Kentaro Kanamoto

Victor Maiorino Fernandes

Sergey Musin

Kashubo Ivan

Claudio Rodriguez-Valdes

Fabian Schempp

Juraj Molcak

Retreat

Andreas Rocha

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(Right)

The Edge

Kentaro Kanamoto

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(Below)

Dreamland

Claudio Rodriguez-Valdes

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Warehouse

Juraj Molcak

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(Above)

Cybor `G`

Kashubo Ivan

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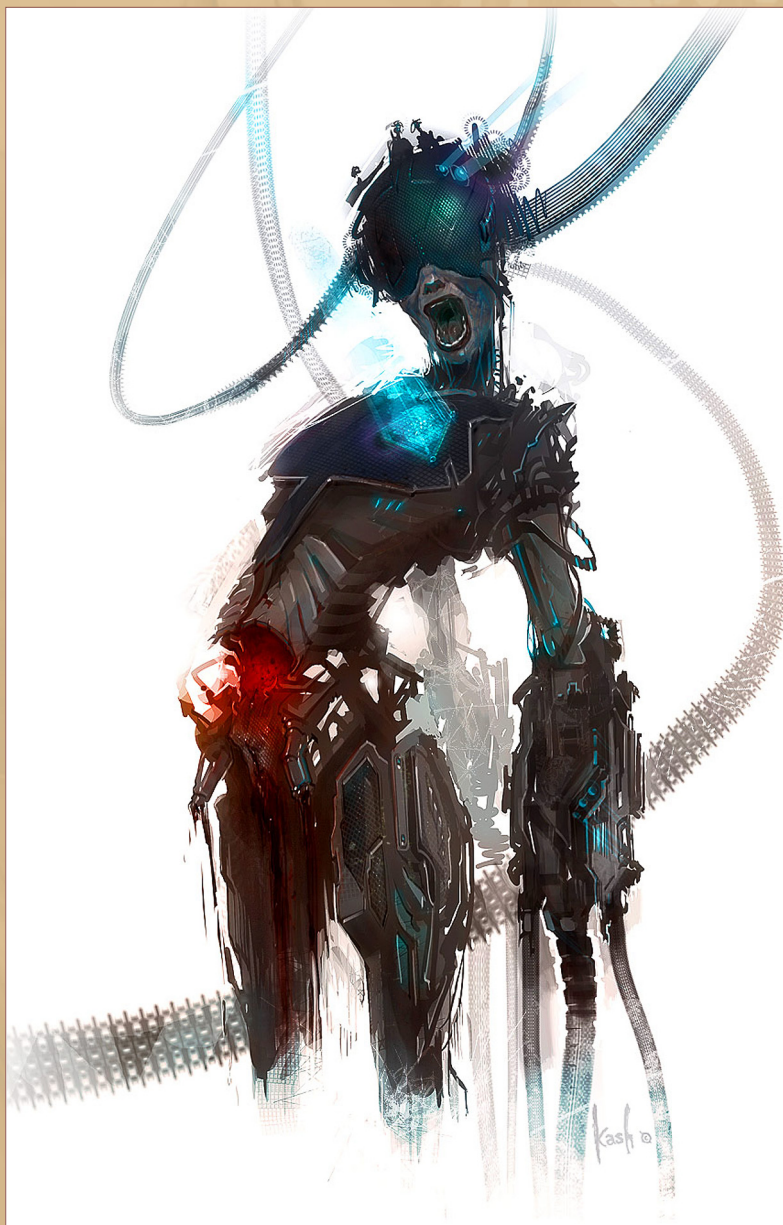
ivankash.art@gmail.com

(Right)

Zé

Victor Maiorino Fernandes

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Arduous Path

Sergey Musin

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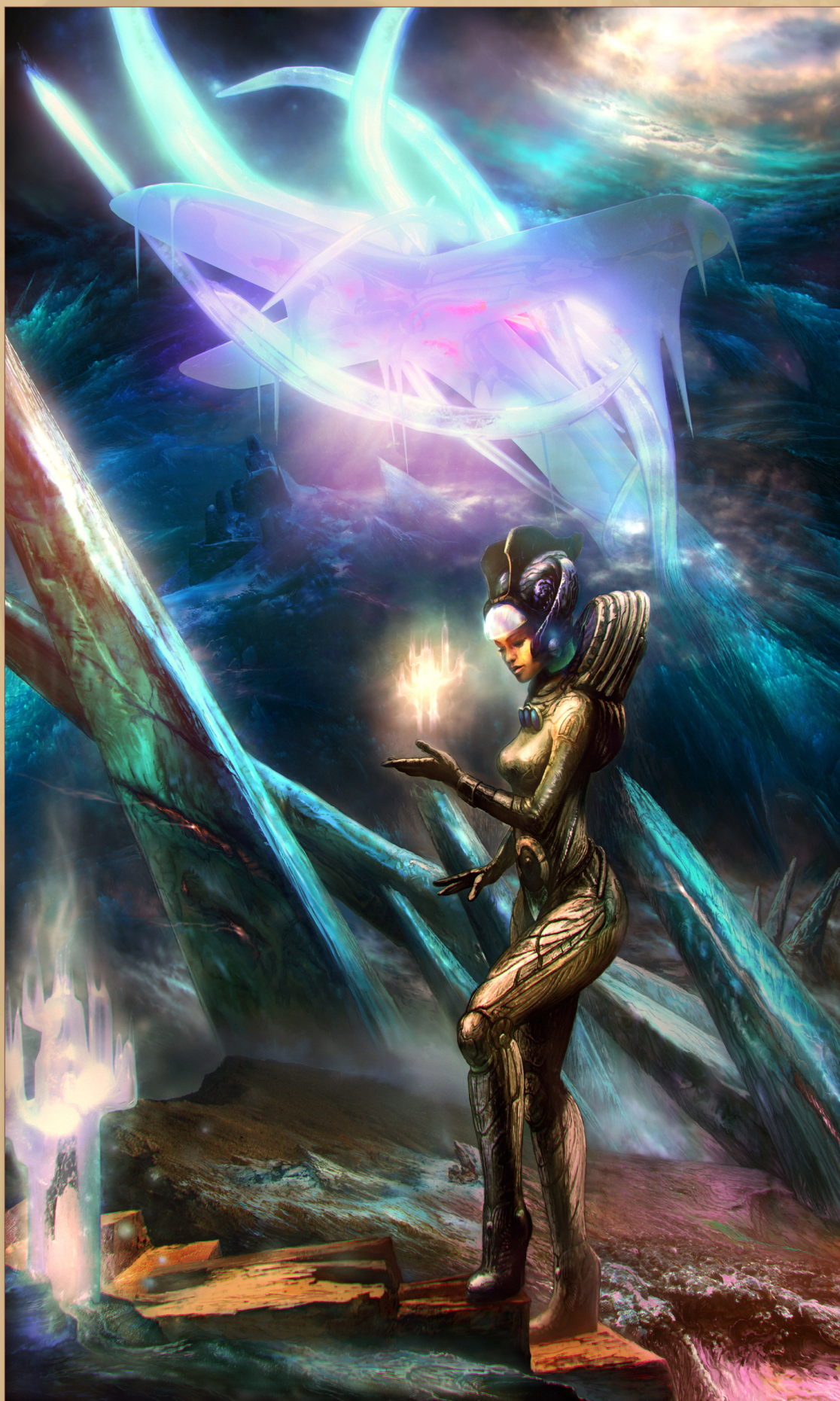
Flamenco

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Goldfish - Cats Pub

Fabian Schempp

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Rock the Casbah

Rudy-Jan Faber

http://rudyfaber.com

contact@rudyfaber.com
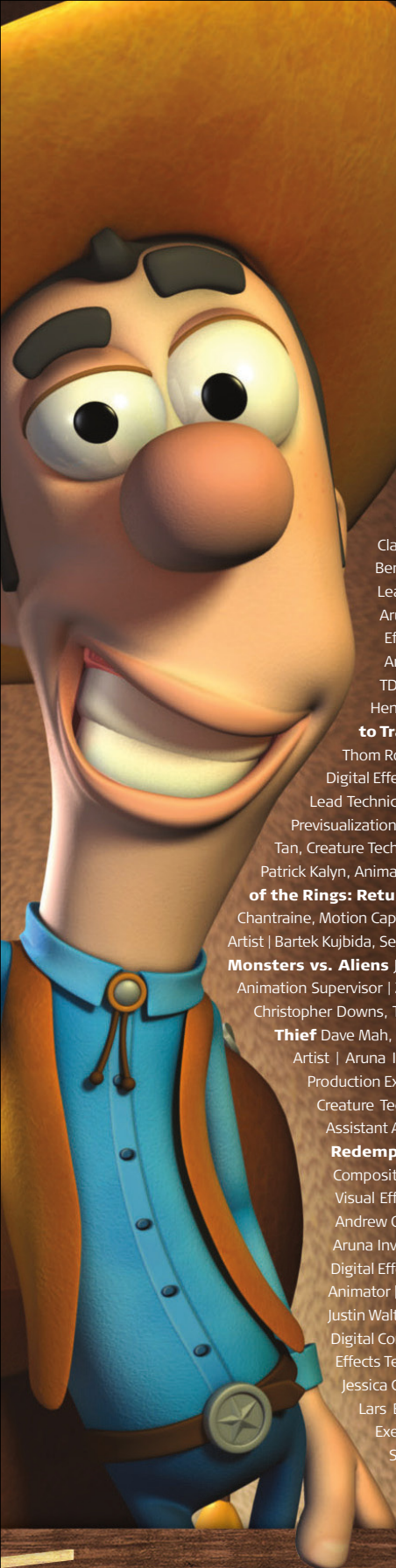
A small selection of VFS Animation & Visual Effects credits includes **Alice in Wonderland** Ken Kaiser, Animator Veronica Marino, Compositor | Phan Wiantrakoon, Animator | John Iskandar, Visual Effects Artist | Jacob Curtis Miller, Digital Artist Geeta Basantani, Digital Matte Painter | Andrew Lawson, Character Animator **Assassin's Creed: Brotherhood** Zack Mathew, Animator | Wilson Mui, Team Lead Animation **Avatar** Michael Cozens, Lead Animator | Tamir Diab, Technical Director | Patrick Kalyn, Animator | Chrystia Siolkowsky, Motion Editor | Ben Sanders, Animator | Alfredo Luzardo, Layout Technical Director | Aaron Gilman, Character Animator | Jami Gigot, Texture Artist **Batman: Arkham City** Jason Martin, Character Artist **Bioshock 2** Jacob Palmer, Animator **Bob's Burgers** Tammy Dubinsky, Animator | Nathan Keane, Animation Effects | Jake Biberdorf, Animation Supervisor **Bolt** John Wong, Animator | Will McCrate, Lighter | Scott Lemmer, Animator | Lino DiSalvo, Supervising Animator/Voice Actor **Brütal Legend** Marke Pedersen, Senior Artist **Cloverfield** Nicholas Markel, Pre-Visualization Supervisor **Coraline** Brian Demoskoff, Animator **The Curious Case of Benjamin Button** Robert Bourgeault, Lighting Technical Director | Jose Julian Karam Lopez, Digital Compositor | Geeta Basantani, Digital Matte Painter | Alberto Landeros, Digital Compositor **The Dark Knight** Gia Sadhwani, Digital Effects Artist | Freddy Chavez, DMR Compositor | Pietro Ponti, Lead CG Lighting Artist **Dead Rising 2** Fredrick Fassé, Animator **Dead Space 2** Wayne Gonsalves, Environment Art Lead **Despicable Me** Justine Codron, Lighter **District 9** Neill Blomkamp, Director/Co-Writer | Shawn Walsh, Visual Effects Executive Producer Samson Wong, Matchmove Artist | Robert Bourgeault, Lighting Lead | Richard Sur, Lighting Technical Director | Paul Copeland, Visual Effects Artist | Julianna Kolakis, Creature Texture Painter | Jelmer Boskma, Modeler | James Stewart, Creature Supervisor | James McPhail, Visual Effects Technical Director | Geeta Basantani, Compositor | Derek Stevenson, Matchmove Lead | Christopher Ahrens, Lighting Artist | Brendon Morfitt, Digital Artist | Bernhard Kimbacher, Visual Effects Data Coordinator | Anthony Di Ninno, Animator | Anna Tonrunroj, Digital Compositor | Adam Marisett, Visual Effects Artist **Drag Me to Hell** Thomas Schelesny, Visual Effects Supervisor **Dragon Age II** Nathan Zufelt, Senior Cinematic Animator **Family Guy** Michael Loya, Storyboard Artist **Far Cry 2** Namwoo Noh, Additional Art | Magdalena Dadela, Cinematic Modeler **Fringe** Bob White, Visual Effects Artist | Scott Dewis, CGI Supervisor **Futurama** Claudia Keene, Prop Designer **Gears of War 2** Scott Dossett, Senior Animator **GI Joe: The Rise of Cobra** Sean Lewkiw, Visual Effects Artist Ben Dishart, Texture Supervisor | Tom Piedmont, Digital Artist | Patrick Conaty, Digital Compositor | Julianna Kolakis, Concept Artist | Jessica Wan, Lead Rotoscope Artist | Jeremy Stewart, Senior Animator | Jelmer Boskma, Modeler | Jeff Tetzlaff, Lead Modeler | Casey Rolseth, Effects Artist Aruna Inversin, Digital Compositor **The Green Hornet** John Iskandar, Technical Director | Farhad Mohasseb, Compositor | Casey Rolseth, Visual Effects Artist **Halo: Reach** David Helsby, Animator | Matthew Turner, 3D Artist | Rajeev Nattam, 3D Artist **Happy Tree Friends** Brad Rau, Animator **Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince** Pietro Ponti, TD Generalist | Gia Sadhwani, Digital Effects Artist | Teh-wei Yeh, Lighting TD | Kieran Tether, Digital Artist | Harry Mukhopadhyay, Lead Effects Technical Director **Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 1** Henry South, Digital Artist **Horton Hears a Who!** Brent Wong, Lighting Technical Director | A run Ram-Mohan, Lighting Technical Director **How to Train Your Dragon** Tyson Erze, Visual Effects Artist | Jiyoung Lee, Texture Artist | Fredrik Nilsson, Animator **Ice Age: Dawn of the Dinosaurs** Thom Roberts, Animator | Scott Lemmer, Animator | Brent Wong, Modeler **The Illusionist** Yann Tremblay, Senior Animator **Invictus** Sean Lewkiw, Digital Effects Supervisor | Geoffrey Hancock, Visual Effects Supervisor | Michelle Skrzyniarz, Matchmove Artist | Jose Yapor, Animator | Jason McKeeman, Lead Technical Animator **Iron Man 2** Teh-wei Yeh, Digital Artist | Stephen King, Animator | Simeon Bassett, CG Sequence Supervisor | Nicholas Markel, Previsualization Supervisor | Marc Roth, Lighting Technical Director | Kieran Tether, Digital Artist | Joshua Herrig, Lead Lighting Artist/Look Dev Artist | Henri Tan, Creature Technical Director | Ben Sanders, Animator | Allen Holbrook, Animator **King Kong** Chad Moffitt, Senior Animator | Joel Meire, Character Animator Patrick Kalyn, Animator **King of the Hill** Michael Loya, Director **Legend of the Guardians: The Owls of Ga'Hoole** Tim Rowlandson, Animator **The Lord of the Rings: Return of the King** Chad Moffitt, Senior Animator | Ben Dishart, Texture Painter **Mars Needs Moms!** Shraga Weiss, Character Modeller | Kirk Chantraine, Motion Capture Technical Director | Joel Pennington, Motion Capture Technical Director **Mass Effect 2** Kolby Jukes, Principal Artist | Brian Sum, Concept Artist | Bartek Kujbida, Senior Cinematics Animator **Megamind** Rani Naamani, Animator/Character Lead **ModNation Racers** Eric Gabas, Senior Environment Artist **Monsters vs. Aliens** Jiyoung Lee, Texture Artist **Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian** Nicholas Augello, Technical Animator | Adam Yaniv, Animation Supervisor | Zeke Norton, Previsualization Supervisor | Rex Ahn, Pre-Visualization Lead | Joshua Herrig, Lead Lighter | Joey Wilson, Previsualization Artist Christopher Downs, Technical Animator | Ben Sanders, Supervising Animator | Ai Saimoto, Lighting Lead **Percy Jackson & The Olympians: The Lightning Thief** Dave Mah, Animator | Ryan Lim, Concept & Creature Artist | Richard Sur, Lighting TD | Julien Stuart-Smith, Look Development | Jeffrey Burt, Lead Layout Artist | Aruna Inversin, Digital Compositor | Anthony Di Ninno, Animator | Pedram Daraeizadeh, Render Wrangler **Piranha** Lon Molnar, Visual Effects Production Executive | Christopher Buzon, Tracking/Lighting **Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End** Ben Dishart, Texture Artist | Scott Jones, Lead Creature Technical Director | Allen Holbrook, Animator **Predators** Magdalena Dadela, 3D Artist **The Princess and the Frog** Claudia Keene, Key Assistant Animator **Prototype** Aaron Parrott, Environment Artist | Harry Ahn, Lead Cinematics Animator | Bobby Bath, Lead Character Artist **Red Dead Redemption** Josh Lange, Senior Animator **Resident Evil 5** Jacob Palmer, Animator **Rock Band 3** Mike Krentz, Artist **Salt** Farhad Mohasseb, Compositor | Casey Rolseth, Visual Effects Artist **Scott Pilgrim vs. the World** Joel Meire, Animator **Sherlock Holmes** Sveinbjorn Tryggvason, Visual Effects Artist **Shrek Forever After** Javier Solsona, Character Technical Director | Tom Piedmont, Rotoscoper **SpongeBob SquarePants** Andrew Overtoom, Animation Director **Star Trek** Teh-wei Yeh, Digital Artist | Nicholas Markel, Previsualization Supervisor | Kieran Tether, Digital Artist Aruna Inversin, Digital Compositor **Star Wars: The Clone Wars** Noraset Rerkkachornkiat, Animator | Matteo Ceccotti, Animator | Sandro di Segni, Digital Effects | Pedro Pozo Acosta, Lighter/Compositor | Nicholas Chong, Digital Effects Artist | KahJeng Cheong, Cloth Simulation Artist | Jim Hatibarua, Animator | Ivy Ho, Lighting Technical Director | Cedric Lo, Animation Supervisor | Brandon Chien-Chia Huang, Animator **Star Wars: The Old Republic** Justin Walters, Associate Environment Artist **Starcraft II: Wings of Liberty** Alvaro Buendia, Cinematic Artist **Stargate Universe** Daphne De Jesus, Digital Compositor | Daniel Osaki, Lead 3D Modeler **Sucker Punch** Ben Dishart, Senior Surfacing Artist | Jeff Tetzlaff, Model/Texture Lead | Tuba Yalcin, Effects Technical Director | Jeffrey Burt, Lead Layout Artist | Ferda Guray Ayaokur, Track/Matchmove Artist **Tangled** Lino DiSalvo, Supervising Animator Jessica Chan, Animator | John Wong, Animator | Serguei Kalentchouk, Character TD **Terminator Salvation** Teh-wei Yeh, Lighting Technical Director Lars Bonde, Lead Animator **True Blood** Christine Peterson, Digital Compositor **The Twilight Saga: Eclipse** Shawn Walsh, Visual Effects Executive Producer | Brian Harder, Creature Rigger | Veronica Marino, Matte Painter/Compositor | Robert Bourgeault, Lighting Lead | Ori Ben-Shabat, Compositor | Jacob Curtis Miller, Lighting Artist | Derek Stevenson, Matchmove Lead **Thor** Pedram Daraeizadeh, Visual Effects Coordinator | Daphne De Jesus, Roto/Paint Artist | Anna Tonrungroj, Roto/Paint Artist **Toy Story 3** Daniel Holland, Sets Artist | Tristan Ikuta, Simulation & Effects Artist | Bill Watral, Additional Simulation & Effects Artist **Transformers: Dark of the Moon** Serguei Kalentchouk,

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Rigging Lead | Jooyong Lee, Roto/Paint Artist **TRON: Legacy** Craig Calvert, CG Supervisor | Brenda Li, Roto/Paint Artist | Jose Julian Karam Lopez, Digital Compositor | Christopher Ahrens, Lighting Artist | Alberto Landeros, Digital Compositor **True Grit** Tom Piedmont, Roto/Paint Artist **Uncharted 2: Among Thieves** Mike Yosh, Lead Animator **Up** Bill Watral, Visual Effects Artist **WALL-E** Daniel Holland, Production Artist | Bill Watral, Effects Artist Mark Shirra, Layout Artist **Warhammer 40,000: Dawn of War II** Nathan Hocken, Lead Animator | Ian Cumming, Senior Artist | Claire Roberts, Artist | Christine Hubbard, Artist | Allan Dilks, Artist **Watchmen** Shawn Walsh, Visual Effects Supervisor | Lon Molnar, Visual Effects Supervisor | Sean Lewkiw, Technical Head of 3D | Ty Duperron, Modeler | Pearl Hsu, 3D Artist | Matthias Lowry, Digital Compositor | Freddy Chavez, Compositor | Dominic Cheung, 3D Artist | Cynthia Rodriguez del Castillo, Digital Artist **Where the Wild Things Are** Justine Codron, Lighting Technical Director **The Wolfman** Karin Mattsson, Animator | Joshua Herrig, Lighting Artist/Look Dev Artist **Zombieland** Mike Rhone, Visual Effects Artist **2012** Zeke Norton, Previsualization Supervisor | Jamie Bowers, Texture Artist | Christine Peterson, Digital Compositor | Anuj Patil, Senior Technical Director **to name a few**

VFS student work by Thiago Martins

Some things in art cannot be avoided, and some things must be understood to create great images. We call these Art Fundamentals. The same compositional rules and techniques to demonstrate depth of field are being used today as were being used hundreds of years ago. In this series industry professionals will be teaching us the art fundamentals that they put into practice, and will be sharing amazing tips that we can all use to improve the quality of our work.

ART FUNDAMENTALS

Art Fundamentals Article: Chapter 05 - Perspective and Depth

Software used: Photoshop

This tutorial is about creating the illusion of a third dimension in a two-dimensional representation of our visual three-dimensional world. Or, put more simply: creating perspective and the illusion of depth.

Perspective is something that took mankind a long time to figure out. Nowadays it takes a lot of measuring and patience to do it right. If you do it right, your work will look about a million times better and solid. Yep, that's what you want.

But beware: perspective might not be so difficult to use when you have one vanishing point. But two can already start feeling like a chore. And with three I usually start crying like a baby in a corner, wanting the third vanishing point to go away (**Fig.01**).

So it's safe to say I'm not much for "official" or "correct" perspective. I'm not patient enough. So for this tutorial, I'll be dealing with the official stuff very quickly. Yes it is important, but if you want to know the real deal about perspective go buy a book about it.

But perspective is not the only subject I'm going to cover. I will be mainly talking about how to fake the illusion of depth (which happens to be the reason why you would use perspective in the first place). And hopefully when you're done reading this tutorial you'll have some ideas (or some more ideas) about how to create the illusion of depth in your paintings. That's what my aim is at least.

The illusion of depth

The illusion of depth, you ready? Here we go! Ok maybe not yet. Maybe we should first talk a bit about what depth (and on a smaller note

perspective) actually is. I already gave some things away in the above introduction, but I feel there is the need to create a good framework in which to discuss this topic.

What Is Depth?

So, what is depth? Well, depth in our case is the one dimension we do not have on a sheet of paper or on the screen in the painting application. It is the third dimension, or the Z axis. Basically depth is the illusion of objects being in front of other objects. Quite simple, right? (**Fig.02**).

Illusion!

The keyword here is illusion! An illusion as in: not real. Like my girlfriend or the monster under your bed! And if you think about it like that,

becoming a good artist means becoming really good at visually tricking the viewer! You are faking depth, light and everything else.

You are using the concepts existing in people's minds in order to give an illusion of something believable. (Unless you are creating abstract art, but I'm not going touch that subject). You are not creating reality; you are creating a fictional representation of a truth.

I mention this because it makes me look smart (prime reason). But also because I noticed some people feel limited and even intimidated maybe, by this idea of "the rules of reality". You can cling to perspective and other formal rules as if they are the commandments. Or you can realize that you can do anything; that you are

God in your own painting. You can choose to give your Orc not only an epic blue glowing sword, but also pink fluffy bunny slippers! It's all in the power of the pencil!

Formal rules are good to know, but should not be considered all-important in my opinion. It's about explaining what you want to tell, and using the right tools to do so.

Tricking The Brain

You can see the illusion of depth as a big puzzle, where you have to combine perspective, shape, light, value, hue, saturation and other things in such a way that you make it easy for the viewers' brain to solve your visual puzzle. I'll be going through most of the subjects I can think of at this moment.

Earlier I mentioned being God in your own painting, and I still feel that's true. But it is also important to realize that when you are making an illustration with depth, you want people to understand it. You have to address the concept that exists in the viewer's mind about depth. In other words: you cannot go around and just add elements to your painting without adding perspective or color and value changes, and expect it to be perceived as depth. You have to know the way depth works in order to play with it and bend the rules (**Fig.03**).

There are a lot of ways to create the illusion of depth. And almost always it's a combination of things that work the best. So it is good to realize that perspective is not a necessity to create depth; there are many more ways to do it.

Achieving The Depth Illusion

Now that you are nice and confused after my fuzzy introduction, let's start with the fun stuff!

On a side note: I'm not much for writing tutorials that will take you through the whole process and explain how to create one specific image, or how to use tricks only usable in one situation. I'd rather try to explain some of the fundamental tools in this tutorial. I think it's more interesting and valuable.

So if you were hoping you'll be able to make an uber-awesome piece of art after reading this tutorial… well sorry.

Tools

There are many tools available to create the depth illusion. From color to perspective, I'll go over each one shortly with some examples to go alongside.

I've listed them below. I'm pretty sure I missed some of them, but in a few years after you have taken everything I just said for absolute truth you'll suddenly find yourself in an argument with another artist that disproves everything I just said and you makes a complete fool out of yourself by defending it; you will suddenly realize the extent to which I was. Yes, that is actually the real goal of why I'm writing this tutorial, just to mess with your head. So don't believe anything I say. Or maybe you should?

So let's get started with the absolute truth about perspective!

Perspective

To explain perspective I'll start out with a quote from the all-knowing and always correct Wikipedia:

"**Perspective** (from the **Latin** *perspicere*, "to see through") in the graphic arts, such as drawing, is an approximate representation, on a flat surface (such as paper), of an image as it is seen by the eye. The two most characteristic features of perspective are:

Size: Objects become smaller as their distance from the observer increases

Foreshortening: The size of an object's dimensions along the line of sight are relatively shorter than dimensions across the line of sight"

What's interesting about this description is that it touches on the subject of perspective as a perspective. Perspective is not reality. Objects

04

do not become smaller if they are further away from you. It just looks like that because of the way your eyes work. It's an "approximate representation". Meaning: it's not the truth, and it can be bent and broken as you see fit.

Perspective As a Depth Illusion

The basic thing about perspective is that it gives great reference to how far away things are. It does this because it creates a rhythm that will

explain to your brain that things that are smaller, are further away. Now there are some tricks on how to create a strong depth feeling using this rhythmic perspective. I'm going to assume you already kind of know about vanishing points and parallel lines coming together at the horizon. I don't really feel like talking about how that works here because it's been done too often. If you want to know more about it: Google it. There's great information about it to be found, only one search away (**Fig.04**).

So how do you apply this perspective stuff for maximum effectiveness? Well, maximum I don't know, but I can tell you what has worked for me so far!

Again it's about creating a rhythm that your brain understands. If you create a perspective with not enough steps of explanation or wrong explanation your brain will be uncertain about how it works. And you will fail to see the depth you were looking for. Like everything within illustration it's about explaining. It's like a puzzle; the more pieces you fill in the correct places the more people will get your illustration. And if you don't give enough pieces, nobody will get it. So I find it very helpful to create some big guiding elements and a lot of small element that keep explaining the position in space. In **Fig.05** I've highlighted some of the things that I've used in this particular case. Some of the things that you can do are:

• Get the general perspective close to correct. If it's wrong your brain can tell

• Use the ground plane, or wall, or some plane that continues into the depth to show certain objects that have the same size (like trees or houses) or color brush strokes.

Make sure these objects get smaller in relation to the depth of where they are. And make sure to put enough of them spread out over the depth of the whole image to explain it. If you nail this trick, depth is guaranteed!

• Create a small detail in the foreground that will indicate the size of a human. This is a reference you put in your image to help the brain solve the puzzle of relative sizes.

Informal Perspective

Now I've said in the above text that it's very important to get the perspective correct. And it is! One mistake and your brain will know something is off. But that doesn't mean you have to calculate everything! Most of my perspective works (except for a few very complex things) are guesstimations. Meaning: I try to avoid things like parallel buildings that will require me to do it correctly. I tend to turn buildings, make them different shapes and sizes in order to make sure the lines aren't parallel and therefore they don't have to finish at the exact same vanishing point. (Of course you still have to make sure they all end up at the same horizon; you cannot have five different horizons where lines come together).

The basis of perspective is the horizon. And the horizon is always at eye level. If you look down, the horizon stays in the same place, and the same goes for when you look up. But if you crouch down, the horizon goes down as well! It is always at eye level. Another thing to realize when you guess your way through perspective is that if something is under the horizon you look on top of it. If it is above you look up. Not everything has to come together at the same vanishing point as long as all the lines come together at the horizon and the parallel lines come together at the same point on that horizon.

Layers

The easiest way to create the illusion of depth is by making something layered. This means putting something on top of something else. Do that often and you have yourself an illusion of depth. One of the things I want to be clear about; you do not have to have perspective in order to create the illusion of depth. With perspective it's easier and it will look more "real", but it's not a necessity.

Foreground, Mid-ground, Background

Something that helps build on the basic principles of layers is being aware of the

Perspective

Repeating elements of the same size

Something reletable to human size

foreground, mid-ground and background. This is probably one of the most used techniques in the digital painting world. It's exactly the same as what I said about the layers, only working front to back. What this means is that you create a couple of planes. It doesn't have to be three; it can be anything from three to one hundred million gazillion planes, but that takes too much time to describe (**Fig.06**). For the purposes of this tutorial I'm going to talk about the following three:

- The first plane, the foreground, which has details.

- The second plane, the mid-ground, which only has some big details.

- The third plane, the background, which has what? Guess! Yep, little to no details.

An important thing to remember with details and depth is that because of the decrease in contrast in depth, you also get a decrease in visibility of details. That means that things do not become fuzzier, as some people tend to think, but rather the shape and shading becomes simpler. With the same strong edges! If you want to create a lot of depth, create more planes and make sure the perspective is correct on all of them. And voila, you've got depth.

Value

Now, to enhance that feeling of depth the best thing to do is to give it some value (**Fig.07**).

It's not true in all situations, but it's widely accepted that the best way to do this is to make the foreground darkest, mid-ground medium, and background light. It doesn't mean there can be no light in the foreground, just that the contrast is strongest there. So if there's a light, the difference between lightest light and darkest dark is bigger than it would be if there is a light in the background.

Now this value thing is something you can easily mess up. It can be quite confusing. But remember: it's about explaining, so you should make sure you do that with your image (**Fig.08**).

Color

Of course value isn't the only way to create depth. Color can help depth a lot. It's quite interesting how color works in our minds and our associations with it. You might think all colors are equal, and I would like to be non-discriminating about color, but I'm afraid it's not so. They are quite different. In our minds we connect to certain colors and to certain iconic and conceptual presets. As you all know color consists of hue, saturation and value and since we've already discussed value, let's continue with hue.

Hue

It's important to know how certain hues are interpreted differently (**Fig.09**). For example, the blue spectrum is considered farther away than a hue in the red spectrum. Why? I'll have to guess the exact answer to that, but I think it has to do with the fact that our minds are used to things moving more and more towards a blue spectrum the further away they are. This is because of the small water particles in the air which reflect only a certain type of color. It doesn't have to

be like that though. Sometimes, for example with a sunset, red is the far away color and blue the foreground color. But if you would have the exact same picture with the colors reversed, the one with the blue in the background would feel like it has more depth (**Fig.10**). The magical properties of color!

I find it fascinating to discover more and more about the properties of colors, but mainly how we interpret them. Colors have all these

associations and emotional effects on us as a viewer. It's good to read up on that kind of stuff (in another tutorial perhaps).

But back to hues. As you can clearly see the hue also changes in relation to the depth position it is at. This means that in deep and epic settings hues often change gradually. This hue gradient is a good way to create, or stimulate, the depth effect.

Saturation

Now hue and value are not the only things of importance in depth. Saturation is as well. But saturation is a bit more of a problem child in this little game of depth. Most of the time saturation decreases when objects are further away And depending on the air (clean, dusty, filled with water particles etc.,) it changes the color and saturation. But it doesn't always become gray or unsaturated for that matter. I find it a good trick to do the same thing to saturation as I do with hue and value: create a gradient that obviously changes from close to far away (**Fig.11**).

Fog! (Cheat Warning)

Fog! Maybe the most used trick in the book of depth creation in digital painting. Select an object, paint fog between that object and the object behind it and, voila, depth. It's a great tool, and for all of you who only care about the result and not the theory behind it, it's the easiest way to create what you want.

But a note of warning: if you use it a lot – and many do – it's easy to see you are cheating your way through creating depth. And it will show that you don't know other tricks or even worse, the theory of why you are doing what you are doing. Fog is a trick and not the solution to the depth problem.

See fog, or that effect, is actually often not fog in real life. The thing that happens in real life is that as light hits the ground, it bounces back up. Sometimes straight up, sometimes against the wall of, let's say, a mountain. This makes the ground part of the mountain lighter then the top part. Also, this will ensure that light bouncing

back from the ground will hit small particles and close to the ground there tend to be more particles (dust, water, etc.,) thereby giving the effect of fog.

That's as far as fog goes or this tutorial for that matter. I won't be talking about what Photoshop filter you should use or what brush size. You figure that one out (and let me know when you do!). Enjoy your third dimension!
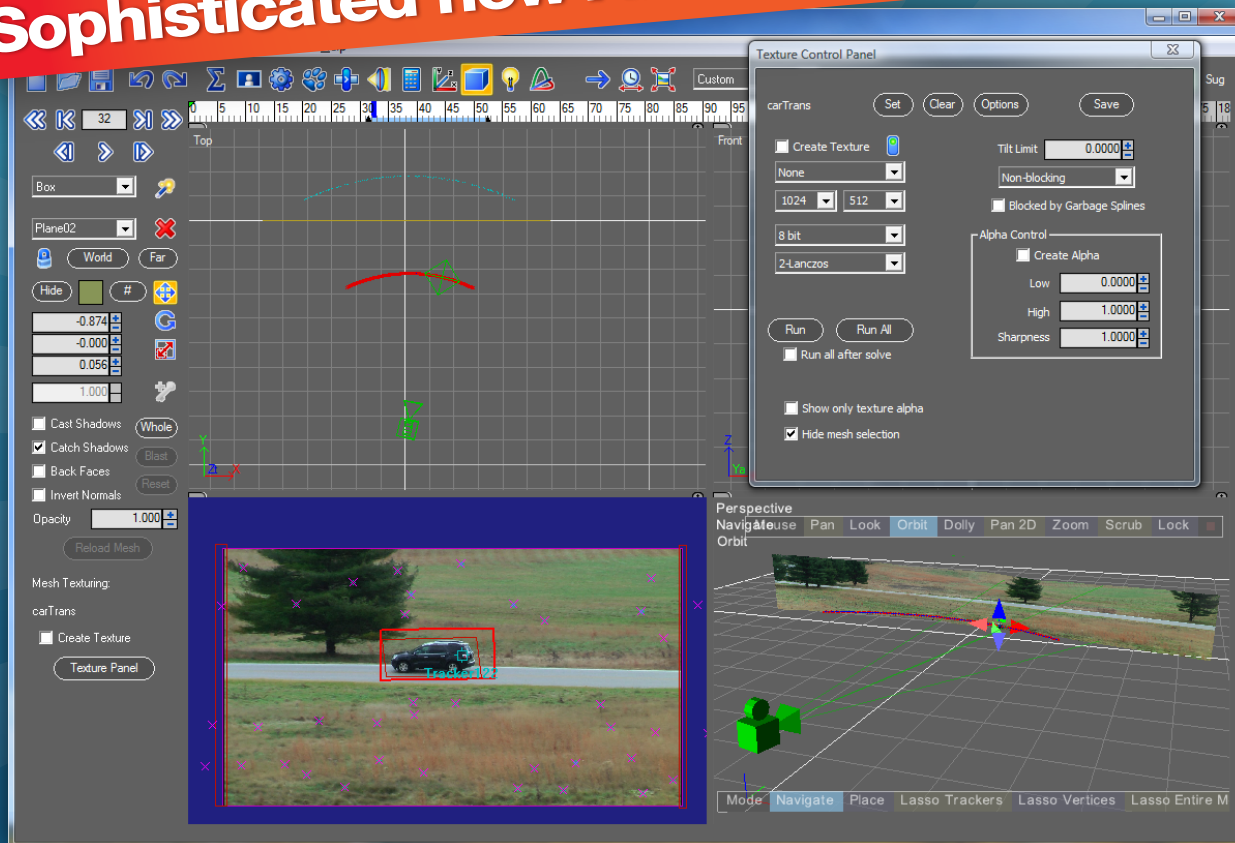
David Smit

For more information please visit:

http://www.davidsmit.com/

Or contact them at:

david@davidsmit.com

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Pin-ups
Military

"Don't try to be too realistic, you're not a 3D render engine. Good looking is far more important than logic. You can easily find references of vinyl/plastic/rubber reflections."

AIR MAIL POSTAL SERVICE

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Military

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Chapter 4 | August Issue 068
Goth

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Pin-up art has dominated digital art forums for years. We are used to seeing it in many different styles and covering many different genres. 2DArtist can proudly announce their definitive guide to pin-up art. Pin-up legend Serge Birault will guide us through the different styles and influences in Pin-up art, as well as giving an insight into the fantastic painting techniques he uses to make his outstanding images.

Pin-Up: Chapter 01 - Military

Software Used: Photoshop

Introduction

For this image I will try a different style than my usual one. I want to do a cute cartoon pin-up, done with very simple shapes. Bambi (her name) will be the character for this entire series of tutorials. This chapter will concentrate on a military pin-up.

Influences

Here's a list of the artists who inspired me for this project.

• Osamu Tezuka: The father of Manga. He used to say he was not a good designer but I think he was wrong. He had the capacity to create great characters with very simple shapes. He provided a very good influence when creating the face I wanted for Bambi, and was a great help when deciding on the proportions.

• The Fleischer Studios: They created Betty Boop perhaps the most popular pin up of all time. I will try to emulate her beautiful legs.

• The Walt Disney Studios in particular Lee Clark: He did a lot of sketches of Mickey Mouse's hands (you can easily find this sketches on internet).

• Bawidamann (**http://www.bawidamann.com/gallery/military.html**): A very good pin up artist who created a lot of military girls. This was a useful reference to have for the uniform.

The Sketch

Usually I don't use a lot of time on my sketches. I do a very fast doodle to see if the composition, the curves and the shapes are good (**Fig.01**).

Colors and Lights

For a vintage looking picture I will need sepia tones (**Fig.02**). I cannot work directly with these colors as it is too time consuming so I do this by

making adjustments at the end. I want to do an exterior scene so I choose a blue background, like a big blue sky. This blue will be my ambient light so it will influence all the tones of my picture. There will be a lot of reflective materials (vinyl/plastic/metal) in this scene. I like to show these with square reflections. It's not very logical because it's an exterior scene but I'm not trying to do realistic rendering, I just want it to look cool!
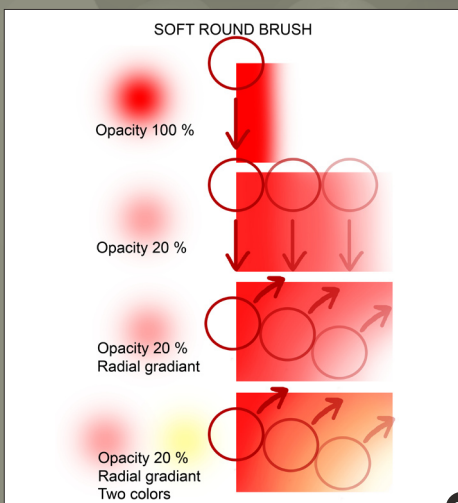
Airbrush Techniques

I do 95% of my pictures with the Soft Round brush. I used to say I was a Hajime Sorayama disciple. When I was young I used a real

airbrush and tried to emulate his style and techniques. I'm just trying to do the same things with software now. It's far easier but at the same time the digital airbrush is a bit to clean for me. There are only two points to manage with digital airbrushes; the size of the brush and his opacity (**Fig.03**). Don't forget that the more opaque part is the center of the circle of your brush. Try to do the good gradients in a single stroke if you can. If your gradient seems to be unclean, try to use a bigger bush. Working with a 100% opacity is very difficult and sometimes impossible. In this case, lower the opacity of your brush. I often
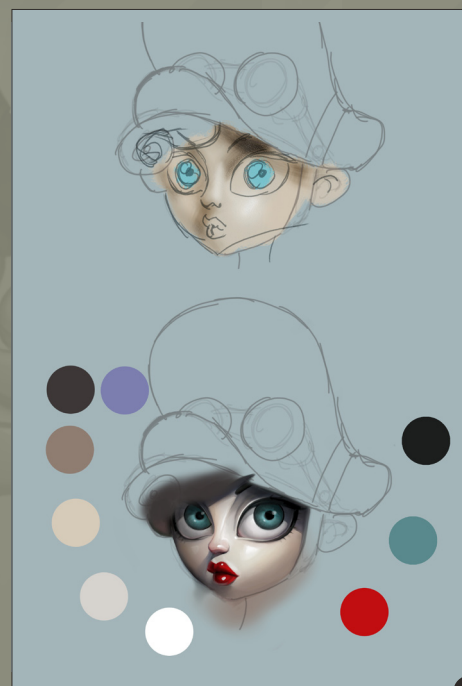
use my brush with less than 10% opacity and do a lot of strokes. Radial gradients are usually more effective than linear ones.

If you want more details on the airbrush techniques take a look at Hubert de Lartigue's website (**http://www.hubertdelartigue.com/**). He is a French airbrush master.

The Head

Big eyes a cute nose and small lips, like the work of Tezuka. I only do simple and curvy shapes. I don't have a lot of flesh tones to do but I wanted a kind of plastic look to her, as if Bambi was a toy or a vinyl figure. So her skin has to be more reflective than normal. The reflections are made with pure white and I add a little bit of blue in the shadow. I begin with a hard brush and I blend the tones with an airbrush. Finally I add some red on her nose and her eyes (**Fig.04**).

The Vinyl/Rubber Parts

All her clothes are done in the same way. I begin with the darkest color. I add brighter colors (a very bright blue) little by little on new layers (**Fig.05**). Don't be afraid to create a lot of layers and merge them when you are satisfied. Use the airbrush with a low opacity for reflections or simply lower the opacity of the
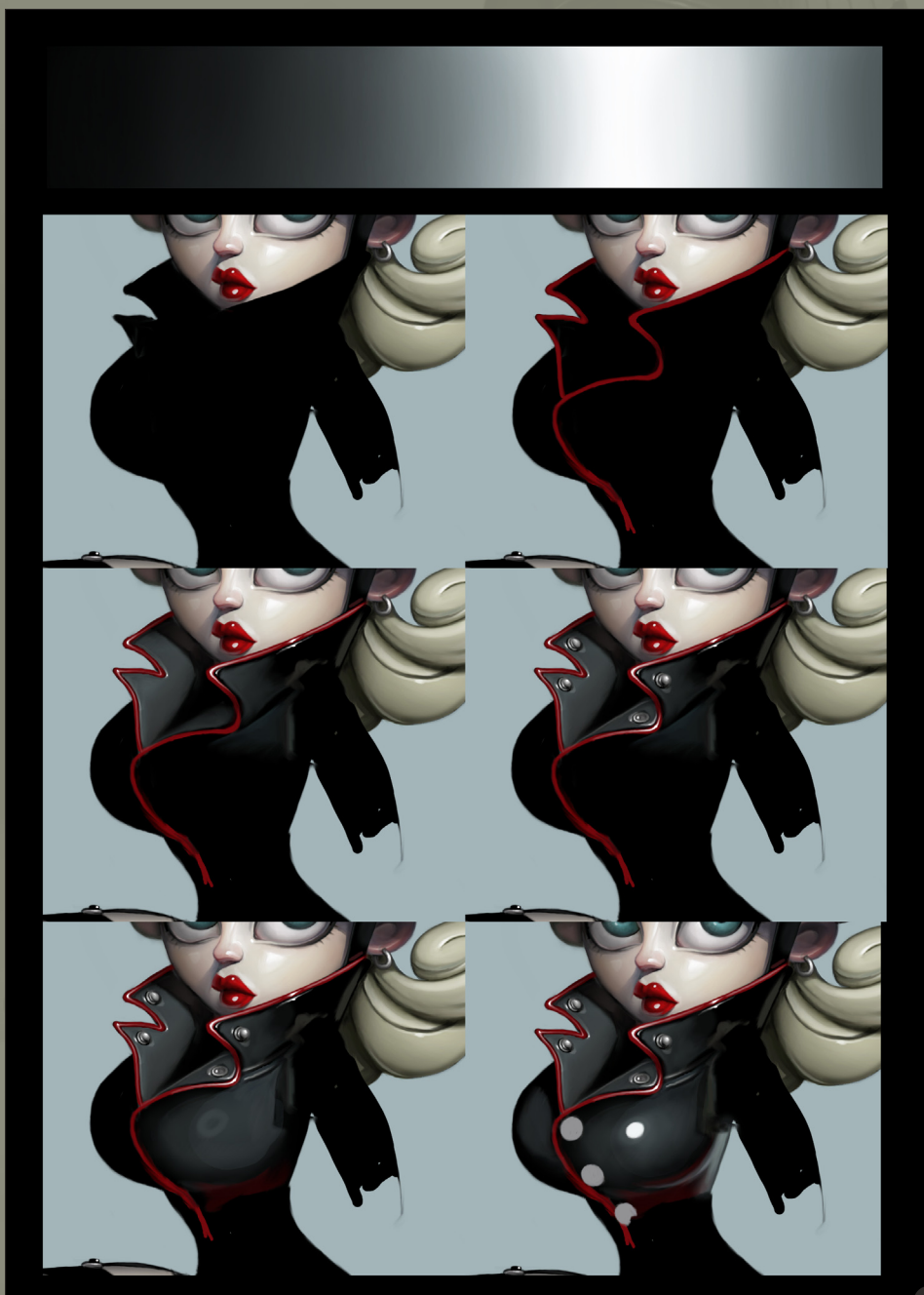
layer (**Fig.06**). Don't try to be too realistic, you're not a 3D render engine. Good looking is far more important than logic. You can easily find references of vinyl/plastic/rubber reflections. A very simple example is car paint.

The Legs

The stockings are very simple. The base color is a bright brown. I simply use the burn tool on the edge, with a soft round brush of course, and a low opacity again. The reflective parts are
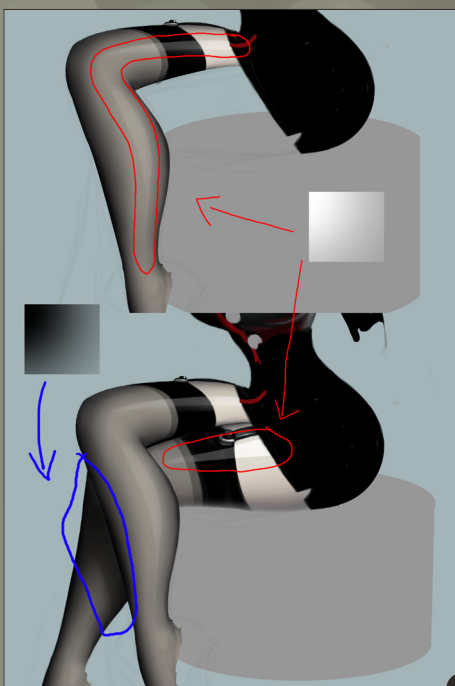
on another layer and are white. I just decrease the opacity of this layer. The shadows are on another layer too and are black. I just decrease the opacity of this layer too (**Fig.07**).

The Tank

I'm not very interested in Military stuff. My tank looks like a 2CV (an old French car with a very funny body and chromium plated headlights and bumper). The tank itself is very simple. The reflections are not very complicated and I don't

spend a lot of time on it (**Fig.08**). The only funny part is the headlights. I try to be organized. Every single part has its own specific layer. Selection tools are very useful for this kind of geometric parts.

Background

Once again, I try to not lose too much time on this step (**Fig.09**). I add smoke and fire in order to hide the low levels of detail behind Bambi. Painting sand is very boring and time consuming. Hopefully the surface is small. I use only 3 colors. I sometimes copy and paste some parts and paint over them.

Adjustments

Adjustments are magic. You can change the colors, the hue, the luminosity or the contrast. If all the different parts of your pictures (character, tank, background) are on separated layers, it will be easier (**Fig.10**). This time, I only create a color type layer and add the sepia tone (about 25% opacity). (**Fig.11**)
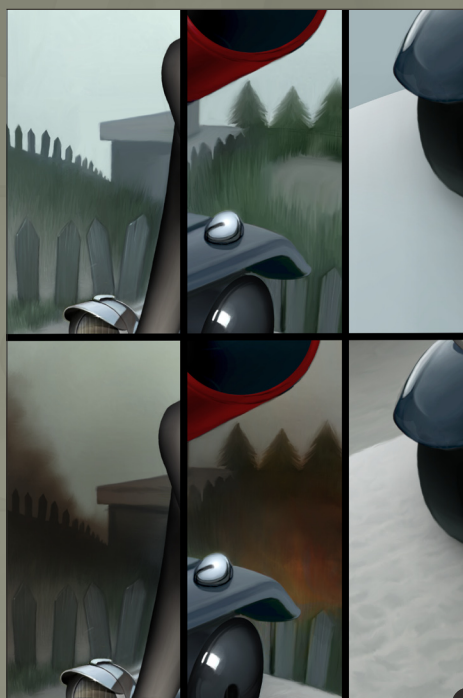
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MASTERING COMIC ART

The comic industry is huge! You only need to take a few seconds to think of the countless films that have been made off the back of successful comics to realise their importance in modern media. Comic book art is a real skill, and requires an understanding of techniques that may not be familiar to every digital artist. This series will talk you through the whole process, from creating a sketch, to inking, through to coloring your comic book.

MASTERING COMIC ART
## CHAPTER 03 - COLORING
SOFTWARE USED : PHOTOSHOP
INTRODUCTION

Before we get started for real on the painting portion of this cover, it's important to first set up a couple of layering tricks that'll make the job a lot easier. For starters, I anticipate that we'll be changing the color of the line art quite a bit, so for easy adjustment it's important to get all of the black into its own layer. To accomplish this, simply Copy and Paste the black and white artwork and paste it into a new channel. Next, click the channel to select all the lines. Lastly, use Edit and Fill (with black) to move all that information onto a new, transparent layer. This method is way more precise than simply using the Magic Wand tool, and by moving the line art to its own layer, you'll be able to adjust it extremely easily (**Fig.01**).
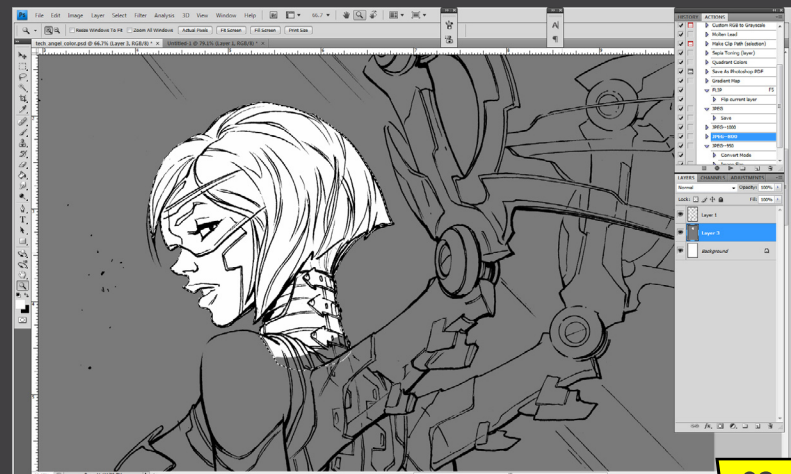
Next make your background layer white, and then we're ready to move onto the next step.
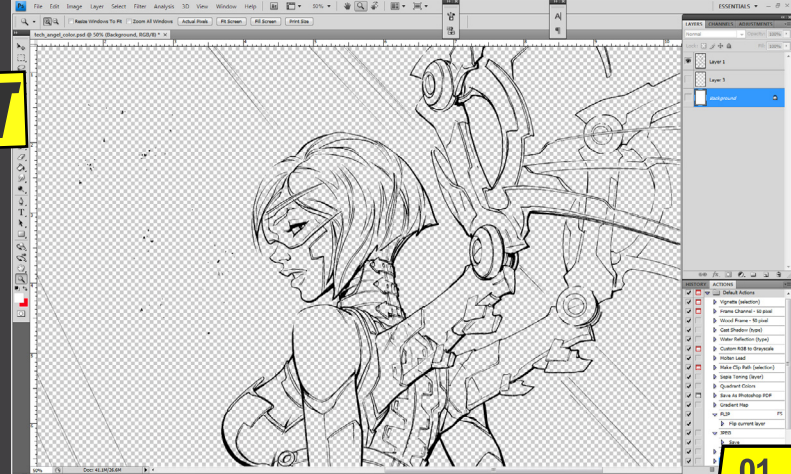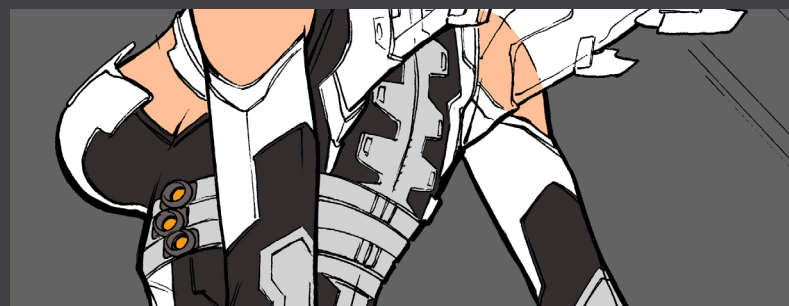

01

02

Now let's start laying in some flat colors. First, fill the background with any color you like (**Fig.02**). Next, under the new line art layer, use the Lasso tool to select the whole figure and fill it with a contrasting color (i.e., different value and hue). Afterwards, continue to break the figure and background into smaller and smaller sub-divisions, using a different contrasting color each time. *Note: the actual hues don't matter – we're simply trying to create a grid of easily selectable shapes that we'll use over and over throughout the painting process.* As you go, test your various shades with the Magic Wand selection tool (with Tolerance set to 20 or so) to make sure it can tell the difference between them.

It's also useful at this stage to group together all materials of the same type. That way, it's easy to select and paint all the areas representing a certain material at once, saving you repeated trips to the Color Picker.

With flats now complete, the image has been mapped with a patchwork of selectable regions, making it easy to click on something and paint only that item without spilling over onto its neighbors.

Now, make a duplicate of this layer. Use the original specifically for selections and use the copy as your actual paint layer. Again, this will allow you to easily paint all of one material and then move on to other ones in turn (**Fig.03**).


03

BEGIN THE PAINTING

Now I begin the actual painting, starting with broad tonal choices that'll help set the mood I'm looking for (**Fig.04**). First order of business is to bring the flat colors closer in line to the palette I want to use in this piece (basically black and white with a couple of color accents). Also, crucially, I establish a very general light source in the background as a road map for all the lighting choices to follow.

And because the sword and wings are meant to be translucent "hard light" objects, I lighten the value of their line art to 50% gray. Tinting like this is often called a Color Hold or a Knockout. On a piece like this, we'll be using the technique extensively.
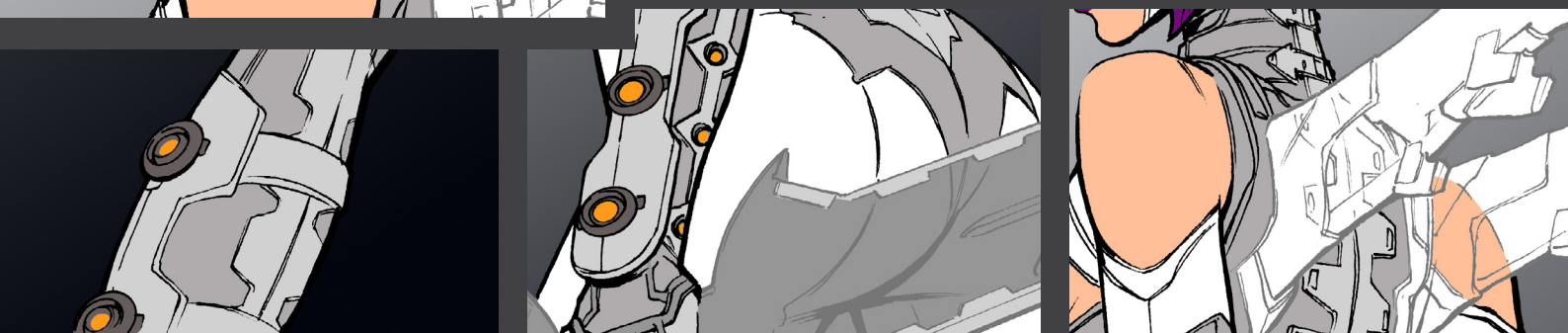
Using my selection layer to focus on various areas of the costume, I begin a light and shadow pass with a loose sketchy brush (**Fig.05**). I'm just trying to find the boundaries between light and dark, and convincingly wrap shadows around the anatomy. Referring to actual human reference comes in handy once again.
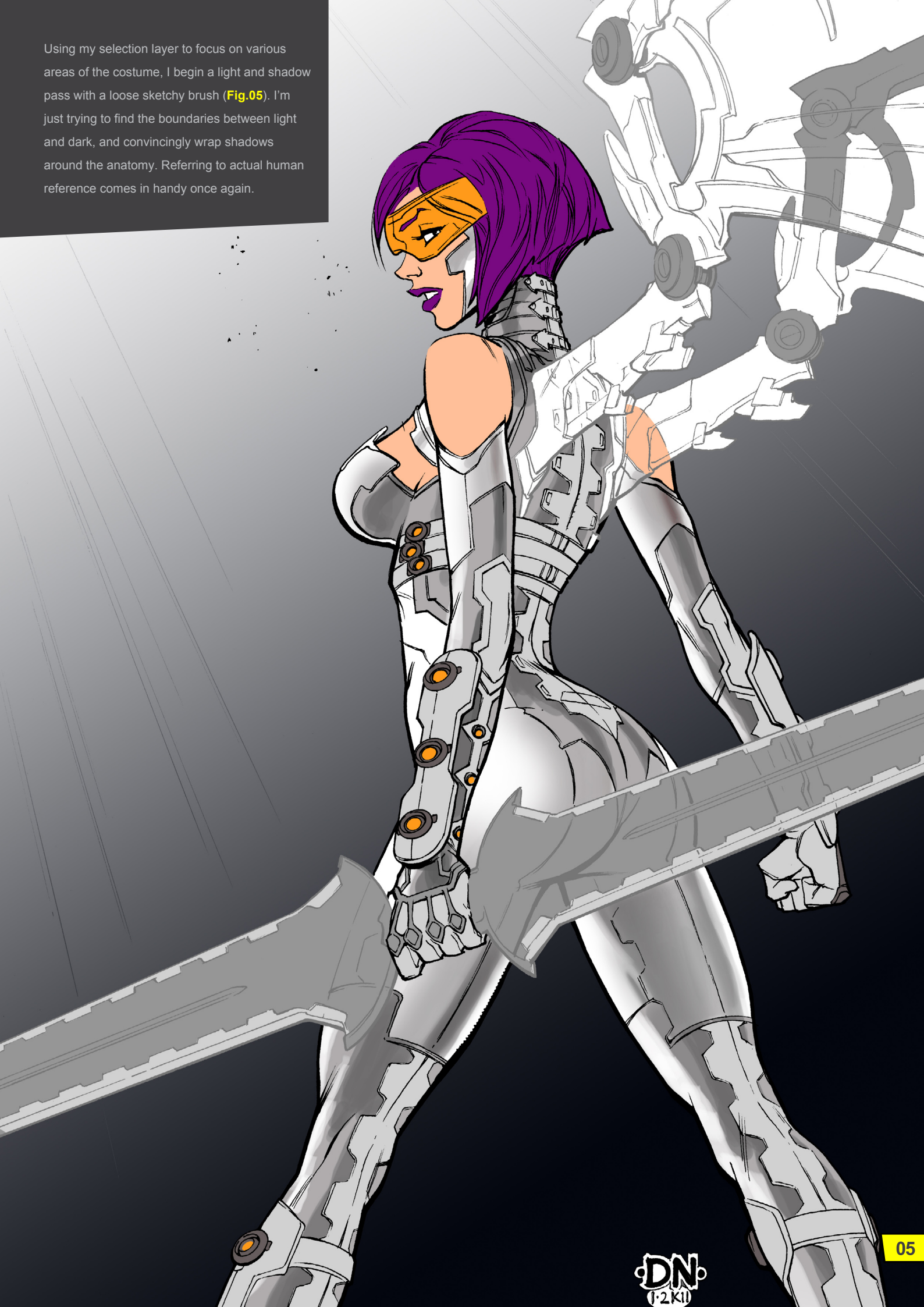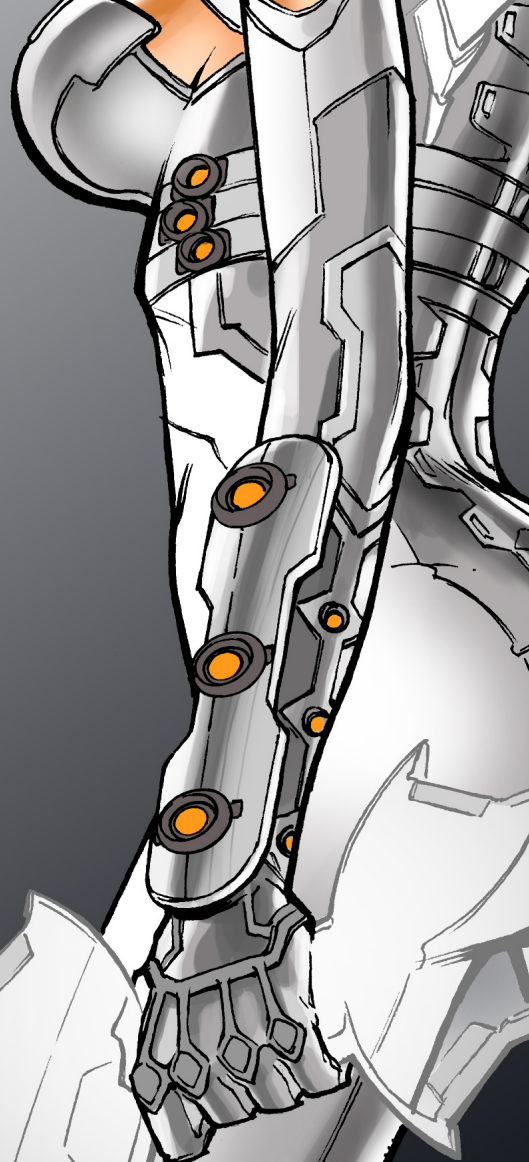
LIGHT AND DARK

Eventually, I've roughed-in the entire figure, and it's time to start tightening up (**Fig.06**). A soft round brush at 50% opacity and the Smudge tool help me blend and refine the original marks. To strengthen the contrast between light and dark, I adjust the Levels sliders and refine individual details with Dodge and Burn tools, again with a soft round brush.

Here's another handy trick: open a duplicate window of your work space by selecting Window > Arrange > New Window for (file) (**Fig.07**). As
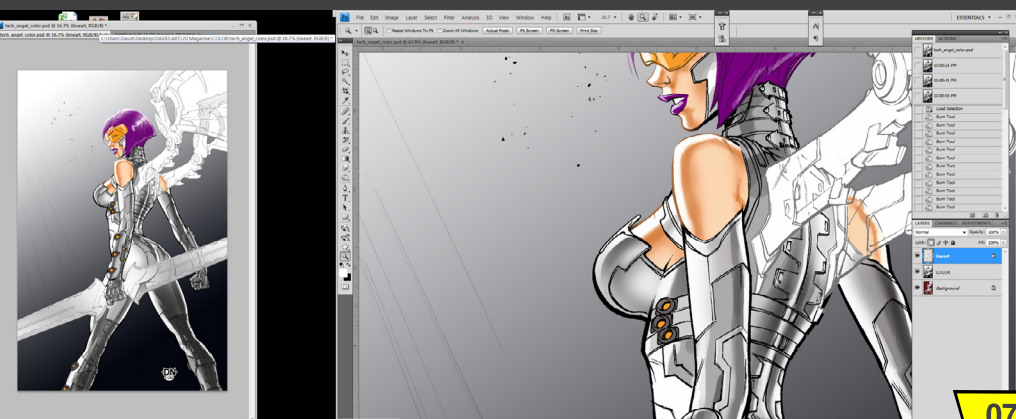
you're painting close-up in the main window, you can keep an eye on how these small changes are affecting the overall read of the piece in the other, zoomed-out window, and in real-time to boot. It's easy to get caught up in details and to waste time rendering things that don't ultimately work. Using the two-windows approach helps to cut down on that. Some artists use the Navigator feature for the same purpose, but I find it simpler to work this way.

06

07

COLOR

When I feel like I've roughed in all the basic shadows on the body, I turn my attention toward other, more loosely-defined areas (**Fig.08**). In particular, it's time to consider the color treatment of the line art. Right now, everything's solid black and for me, that looks too flat. So working just as I did during the inking process, I treat each line according to its context within the overall lighting scheme: near the light, and the line is tinted a light color or even erased; away from the light, and the line is allowed to remain dark.
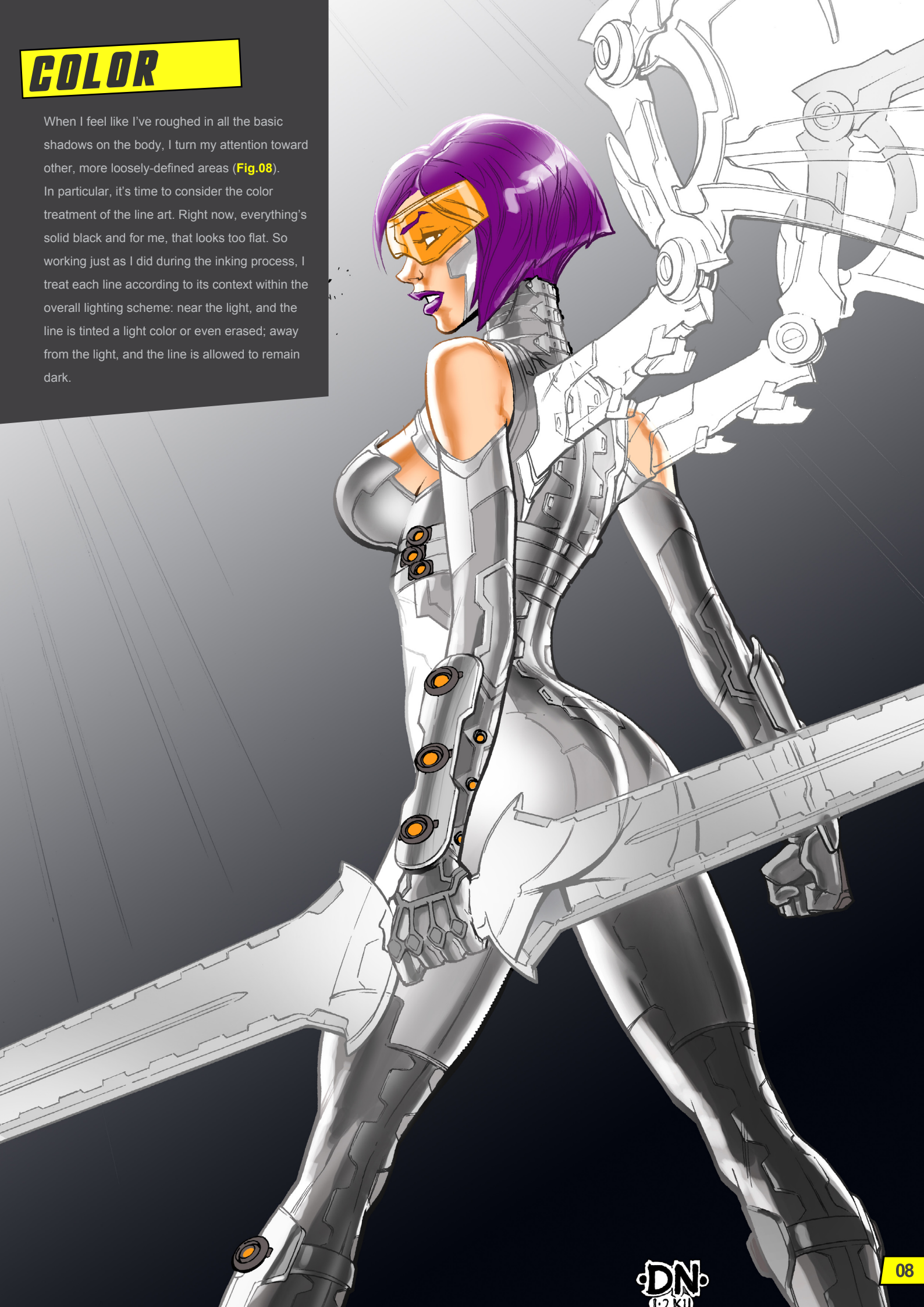
Next, I address the light source with a rendering of directional rays (created with a custom brush and warped into perspective). For the background, I decide that some vaguely-defined ruin shapes would help round out the composition, so I grab a few photos off the internet, manipulate them heavily, and finally drop them into a new layer set to Pin Light at around 16% (**Fig.09**). A subtle suggestion is all I need; anything more will distract from the figure, which is where I want to focus the viewer's attention. Lastly, I add an orange outline around the entire figure, to further emphasize its shape and to pop it off the background.

09
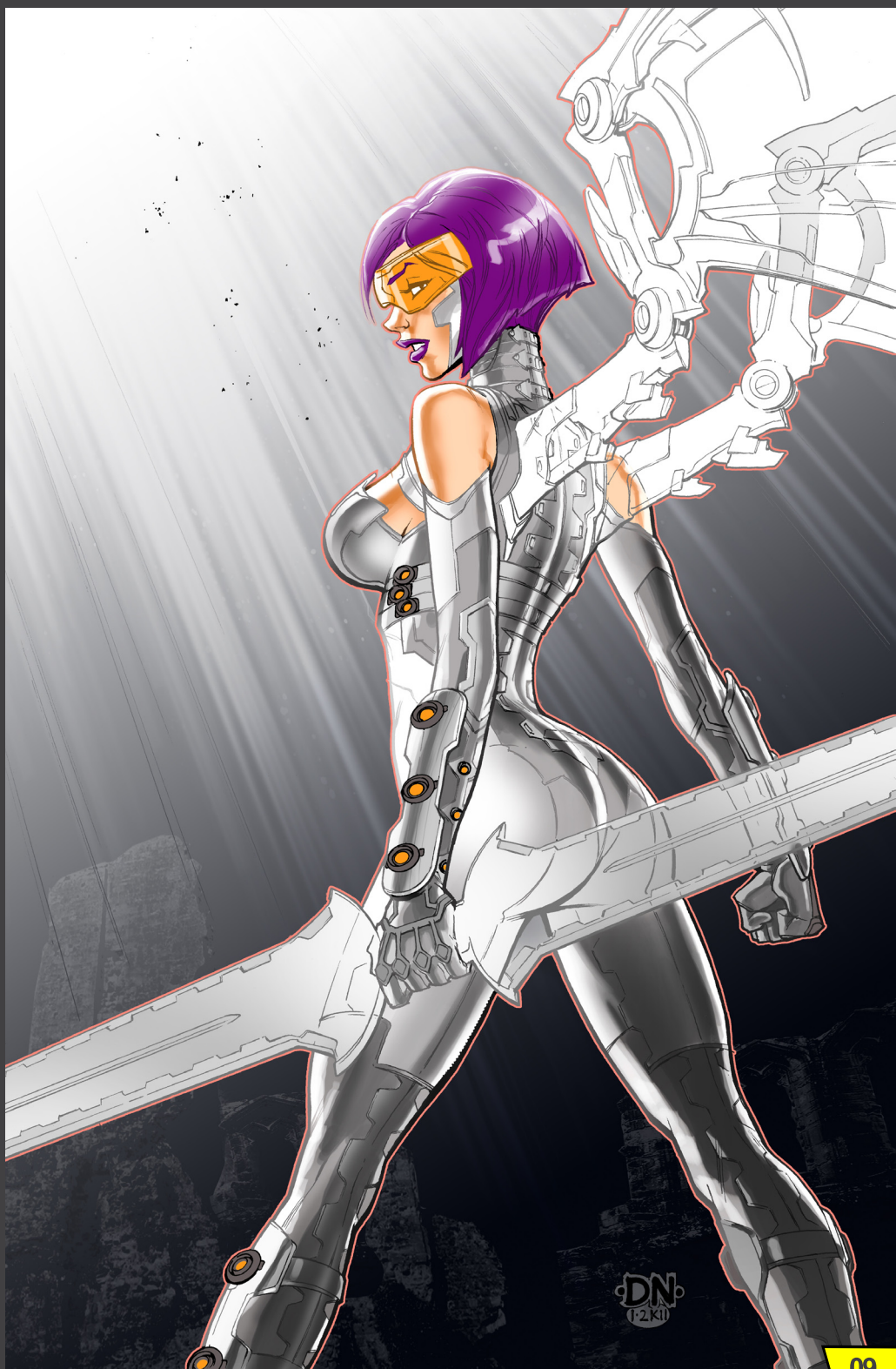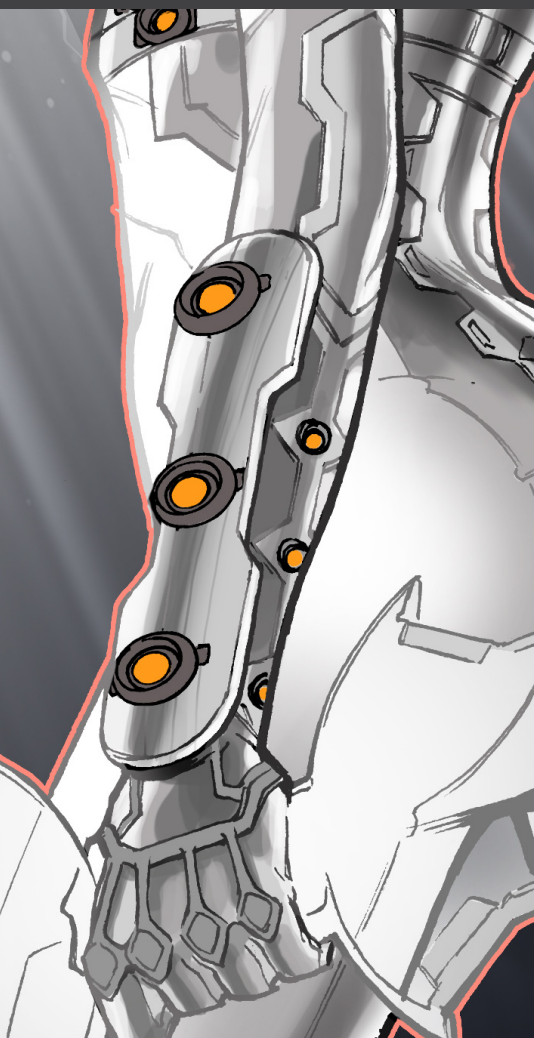
Most of the main compositional elements have been addressed at this point, so it's back to the figure rendering (**Fig.10**). I notice that my light and dark contrast looks pretty weak, so I pay special attention to shadow edges, exaggerating them with dark paint, additional Burn, and further Levels adjustments. I also notice that the various regions of her costume are blending together, so I make final decisions about which elements will be light or dark and Level accordingly.
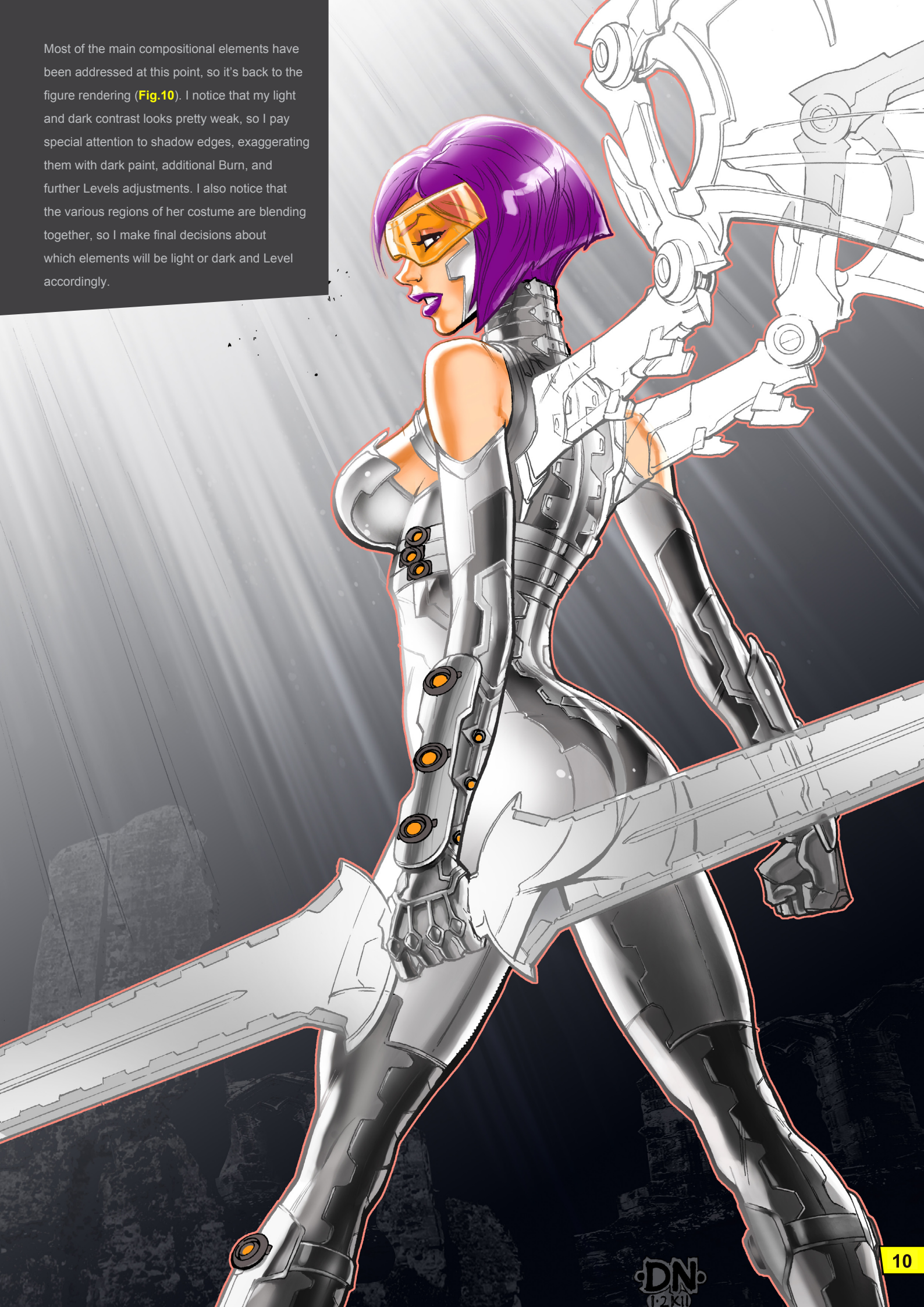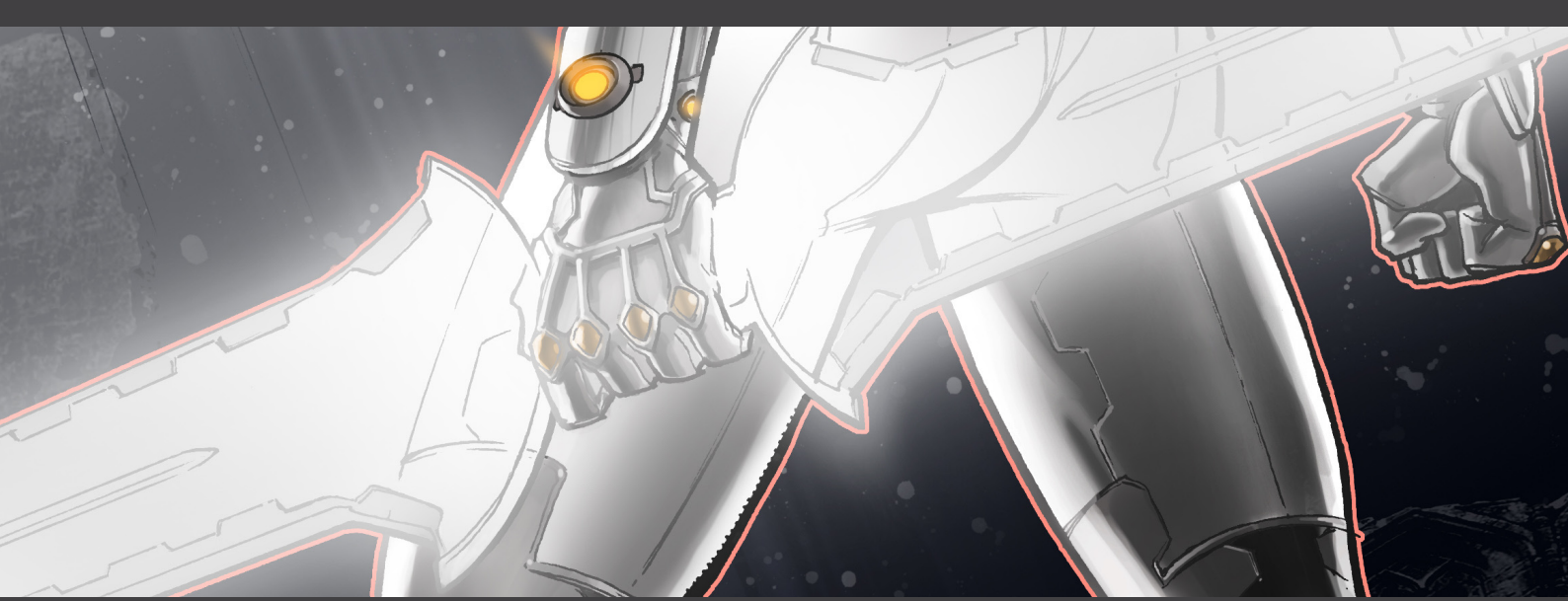
I've left a few lighting bells and whistles to the end, and it's finally time to finish those off. I add orange glows to some of her costume details, a splatter texture in the background and a heavy glow on the "hard light" objects, using white paint on a new layer set to Screen mode at around 75% (**Fig.11**).
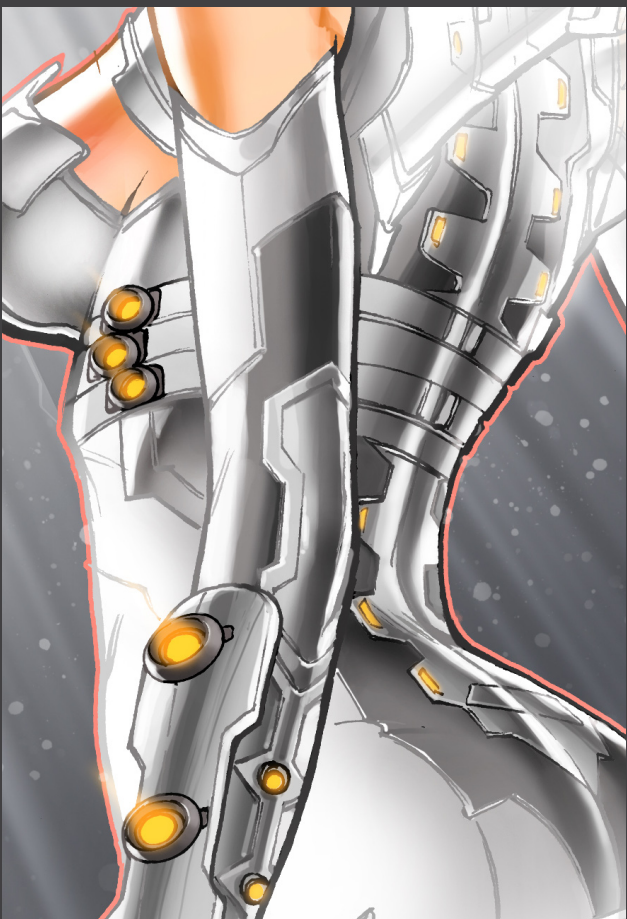
I'm essentially done with the painting process at this point, so I stop to see if anything's missing. Though I like the simple black and white look in theory, I feel like the character's full-color highlights are standing out too much in practice. So to improve color unity, I add a new purple tint layer set to Soft Light mode at around 21% (**Fig.12**). This adds just enough saturation to pull the background and foreground together.

My editor suggests that I take this one step further, by tinting the glowing objects orange. I play around with various solutions, but eventually get the effect I want by turning my glow layers into two identical orange tint layers, one set to Overlay at 44% and the other to Screen at 79%. Turns out that he's right on the money: with orange and purple distributed throughout the image, there's plenty of connective tissue to hold it together as one unified image (Fig.13).

13
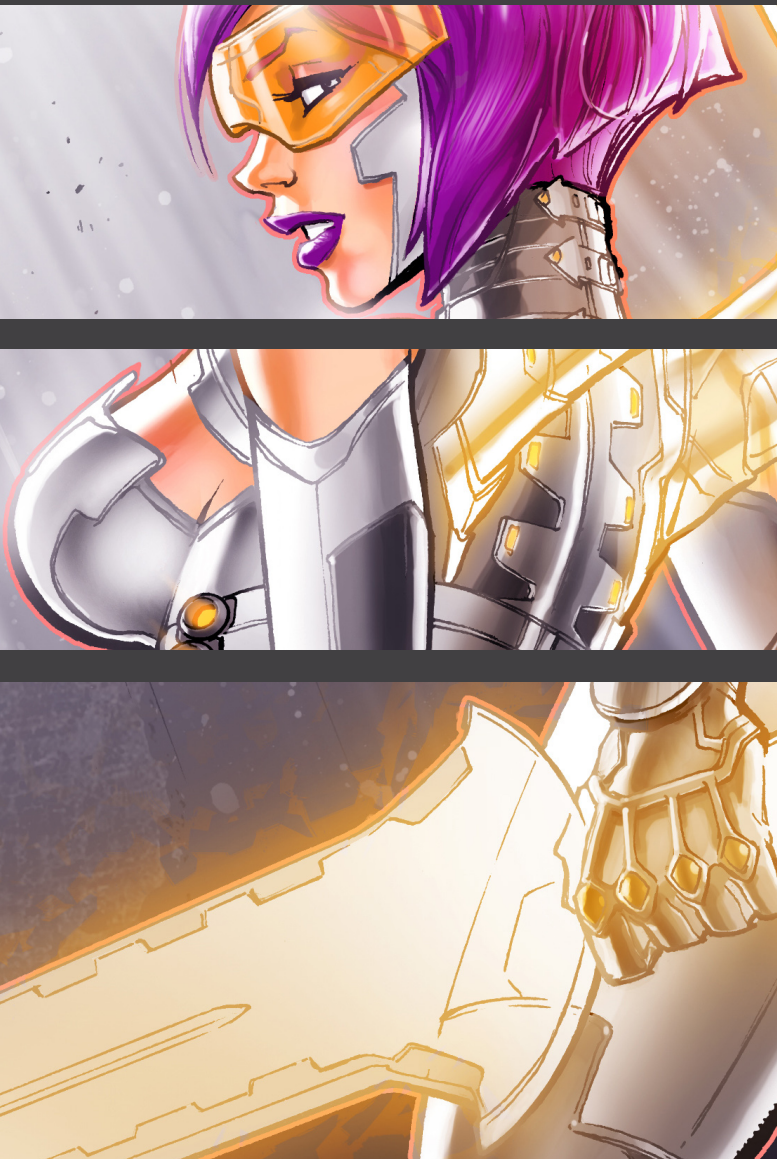
And what comic cover would be complete without its logo and trade dress? I grab a couple of free fonts off the internet and whip up a logo that matches the vibe of the character (Fig.14).

Thanks so much for reading! I hope this helps de-mystify the process of creating modern comic book covers. If you have any additional questions, don't hesitate to seek me out at www.davidnakayama.com or at Deviant Art.
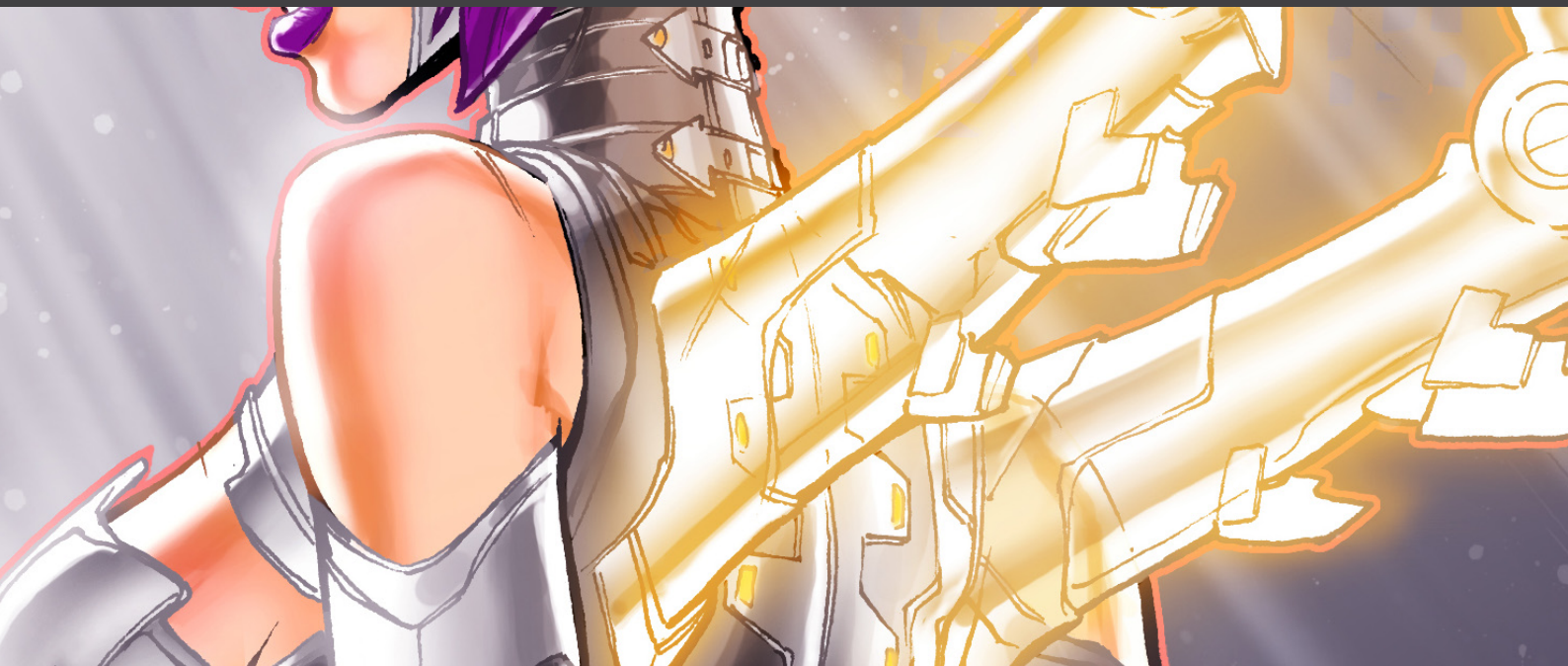
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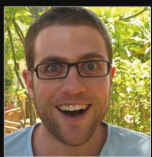
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Unreal Games Engine Tutorial
Lighting and Post Effects is the subject **Andrew Finch** will be talking you through in this chapter of our **Italian Courtyard** tutorial series.

Modeling Features of the Human Anatomy
Jose Lazaro, **Gavin Goulden**, **Lino Masciulli** & **Anto Juricic** explain the process of creating eyes in chapter 2 of our Human Anatomy series .

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PHOTOREAL FANTASY
ALIEN

The fantasy genre is hugely popular in the CG industry and has been showcased in hundreds of movies, computer games and artworks over the years. With such potential for magic, monsters and imaginations to run wild, it's easy to see why fantasy is such an attractive subject. But giving fantastical ideas enough of a basis in reality to be convincing can be difficult. In this series our talented artists are going to take one aspect of fantasy – legendary creatures – and show us how they would tackle this problem. Some use photo integration, others paint the creatures very carefully with a steady hand, but all share the benefits of their experience and reveal the tricks and techniques they use to make the unreal seem real.

Photoreal Fantasy - Alien

Software used: Photoshop & Painter

For this tutorial my goal was straightforward and clear: "paint a realistic alien". All the specifics of the piece were left to me. Such a vast playing field may be a bit daunting, so to get a few ideas I started to set up a mood-board for inspiration.

A mood-board isn't a collection of images used for reference as they are, rather it is an inspirational tool aimed to set the mood for a given piece and provide starting points. I had already decided that my alien would be humanoid and female, and was inclined to set her in a water environment. I wanted her to feel believable, and so started to assemble inspirational images regarding sea creatures and plants, from kelp to sea anemones and lionfish.

Using the mood-board photos as a raw conceptual base, I started sketching some very rough concepts, mixing and matching features, shaping and changing it until I found a combination that "clicked" with my idea of an alien living in a warm water world. At that point I took the concept sketch and refined it into the line art. Some details, like the pattern on the alien's skin for instance, won't appear until a later phase of the work. I usually don't do very detailed drawings, but rather use them as a simple base for the color work. I also didn't draw a background, since for this piece the
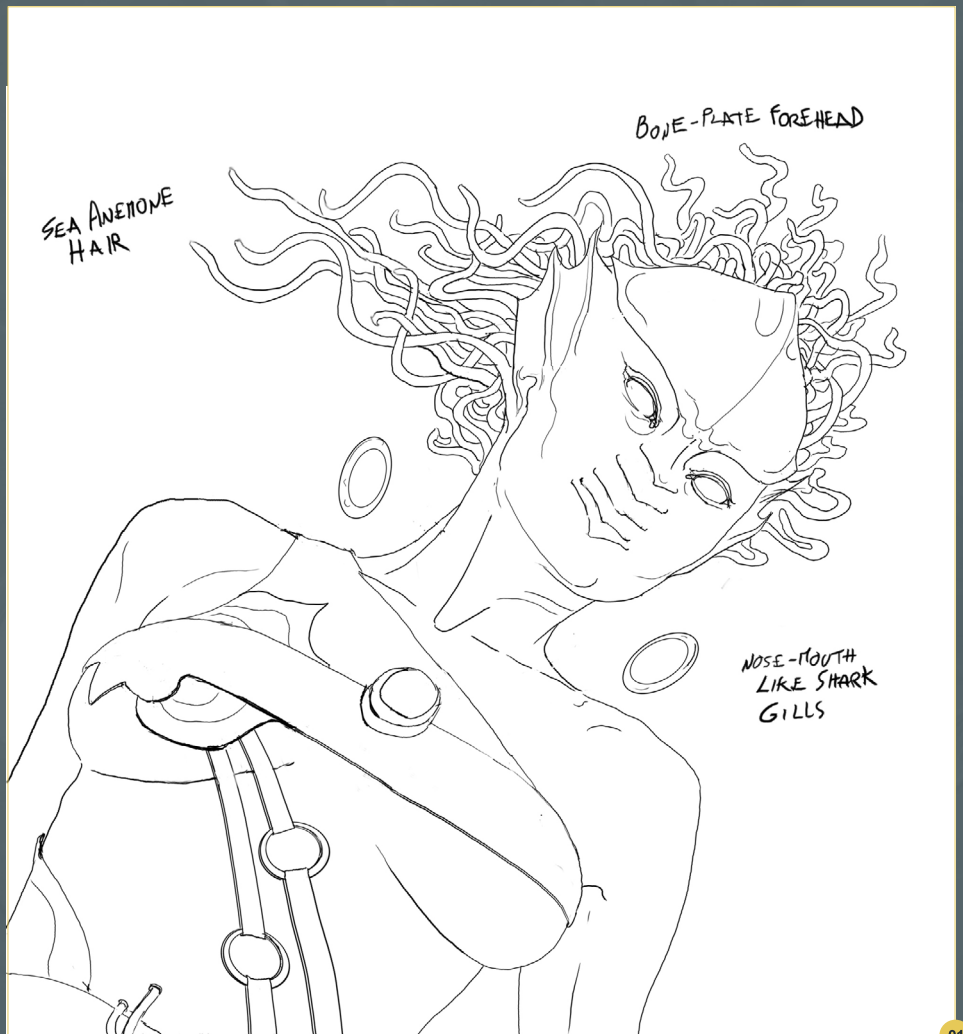
background was to be very simple. I blocked it in later, directly in color (**Fig.01**).

Then I imported the Photoshop line art into Painter 11 for the first step of the color phase. I like how Painter mimics traditional media and sets a natural-looking base texture, which helps to avoid the "artificial" digital look.

I use Oils and Artist's Oils brushes for my color bases. For the color blocking-in I work with the Round Camel Hair brush (from the Oils set), the Wet Oily Palette knife (from Artist's Oils) and the Glazing Round brush (from Oils). For my final pass in Painter I use the Sharp Triple Knife from the Palette Knife set; it is an interesting brush I use to create a strong base texture, as shown in this detail (**Fig.02**).

All these brushes are used with the standard Painter 11 settings, with the exception of Opacity which I adjust according to my needs (it generally goes from 30% to 60%), and of course the tip size which (it goes without saying) varies according to the size of the element I'm working on.

In this phase, working on a single layer, I blocked-in the colors (including the background

Before
After
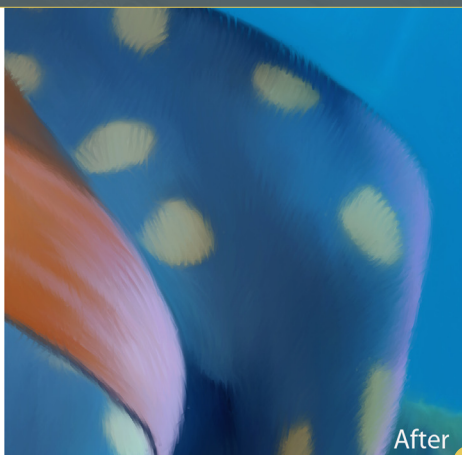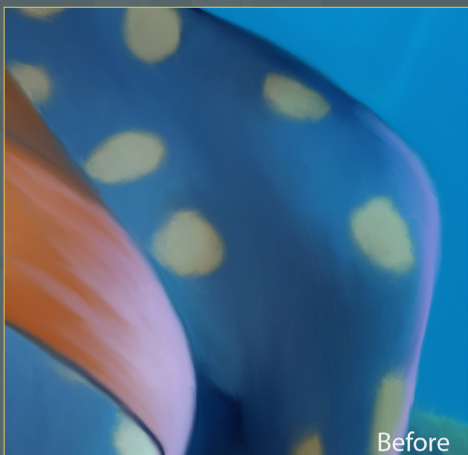
for the alien) and defined basic volumes and shadows. All of my swatches are already present in the image (**Fig.03**).

When I went digital, four years ago, my Painter step used to be shorter and rougher. Nowadays I tend to expand and refine it more, taking advantage of its almost traditional flavor, although I don't envision working exclusively in it.
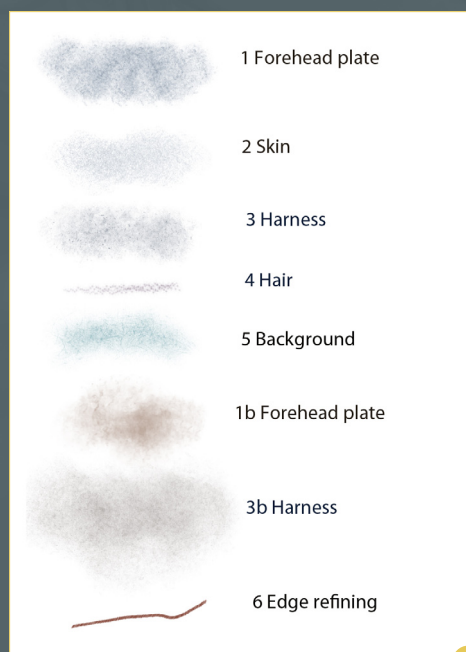
The blocking-in was done so I imported the file into Photoshop (I work with Photoshop CS4, to be precise – being able to rotate the canvas is a very handy option in my opinion). There I copied the alien onto her own layer, and also selected and copied her costume/harness and hair on different layers.

1 Forehead plate

2 Skin

3 Harness

4 Hair

5 Background

1b Forehead plate

3b Harness

6 Edge refining

You may notice that a part of her harness disappeared in the previous step. That was done on purpose, given that those leather straps are in front of everything else and I was thinking about changing the design. I left them out of the blocking-in phase and inserted them directly in the first Photoshop step, on their own layer (**Fig.04**).

I like to use a hard elliptical brush to define edges and shapes (brush #6) set at 82% opacity and 100% flow. In Other Dynamics, Opacity Control and Flow Control are both set to Pen Pressure and Opacity Jitter is at 40%. I always set my brush sensitivity to Pressure, both for tip size and opacity and flow.

Now it was time to start the texturing of the alien and her equipment, differentiating the materials. In my work process all the textures are painted. Years ago I experimented with integrating photographic textures in my illustrations, but wasn't very happy with the

results. In a few cases dealing with very simple shapes, no matter how much I fiddled with them, photographic textures just didn't work for me.

I was careful not to completely smooth away the base texture I had created with the Palette Triple Knife. The idea is for the two layers of texture to blend together. In my work textures are always layered, I work on the same material with different brushes at different stages, combining them in such a way that the different visual properties are perceivable. In **Fig.05** are samples of all the Photoshop brushes I used.

The brushes I use for texturing always have flow set to 100% and opacity goes from 20% to 70%. I think that having a strong random element in a texture makes it more visually interesting, hence in my brushes the Shape Dynamics and the Angle Jitter is between 10% and 15% and set to Control: Direction. Opacity and Flow Controls are set to Pen Pressure.

All the brushes I used for texturing (apart from #4) are custom brushes I gathered, or made through experiments. I often try out new brushes, mixing and matching different ones and studying the results. It is better, in my opinion, not to let oneself be limited by a brush's name or the way a specific illustrator uses it. One of the most effective brushes I ever found to give a subtle texture to human skin, for instance, was originally created to paint dry, cracked mud (**Fig.06**).

Given that water is much denser than air, and the background elements are both submerged and relatively far, I've chosen to use a single texturing brush for the background (#5), instead of the different, specific ones used for the figure. In this way the illusion of depth is enhanced.

Depth is also important for the alien's tentacle-like hair. The part nearest to the observer has the strongest texture, while the receding elements have a lighter texture, or tend to become more indistinct as their value and texture get nearer to that of the sea water surrounding them. For this reason, I have used brush #5, set at a low level of opacity (30%), to texture the tips of the hair/tentacles. At this point I also added some fish to give more life to the background, and painted in the two floating beacons/communication devices at the alien's sides (**Fig.07**).

Natural textures are never uniform. Skin is softer in some regions, and drier, more fragile or callused in others depending on work, health and previous injuries. Scar tissue is shinier than normal skin pores and may be more evident in some places and so on. At this point I worked on the previously painted textures, using a standard round soft brush at 25% opacity to soften the texture in places, specifically the shoulders and breasts.

I also worked on the yellow spots, making the central point of each spot brighter, giving them a slight luminescence. I also painted some

fainter spots on the bone forehead plaque by selecting the desired shapes with the Lasso tool and adjusting the color balance towards yellow (**Fig.08**).

For the final texturing of the forehead I made two different layers. On one I used brush 1b in Soft Light mode. On the other one I used a standard speckled brush in Color Dodge mode.

I refined the harness design and adjusted the lights, considering the two additional light sources now present. I took advantage of them by making one warm and the other cold. Two different light temperatures are very important to help define volumes and make them more three-dimensional.

The final refining step is when I work on decoration. Elements like ornate hems, tattoos, body painting and the like are added at this stage. My key instrument for this is the Selection tool, which I employ to create digital templates.

To create ornamented hems on the bra, I selected it and moved the selection in such a way to leave out of it a strip of the garment (**Fig.09**). Then I used brush #3b to paint a light cast shadow along the "marching ants" line to give the impression of a thicker hem. Then I refined the internal edge (the "furrow", if you wish) with the hard elliptical brush I used to define edges at the very beginning (#6).

In order to create etchings I don't use Photoshop's Layer Styles (specifically Bevel

and Emboss), because the program obviously applies the styles in a uniform, mechanical way. The results feel rather artificial and because of all this I found using a different way is faster.

On a new layer I drew the desired decoration with a round hard brush (depending on the kind of decoration one can also use a vector pattern). Once done this layer will be used only as a Selection tool (**Fig.10**). I turned the "etching base" layer off and selected it, then I copied and

pasted the selection from the under layer (it will not be visible at this point), before altering the color or the levels of the pasted selection. I did this operation twice, once with a dark color (the shadow) and once with a lighter one (the light). The two layers aren't exactly superimposed, of course, I kept them a few pixels off one another depending on which side the light is coming. Then I refined the decoration working with the Eraser, the Smudge tool and the usual #6 brush.
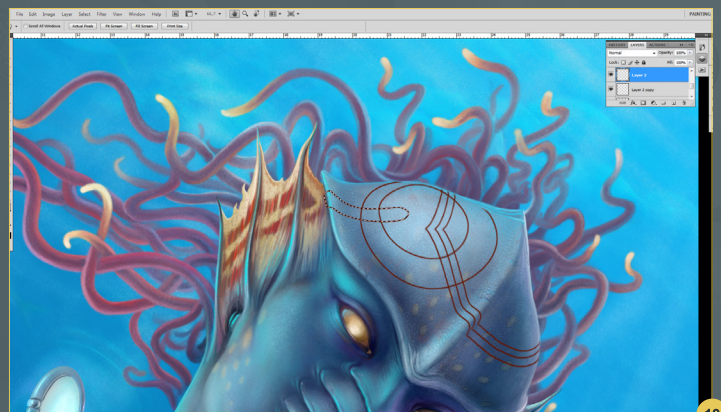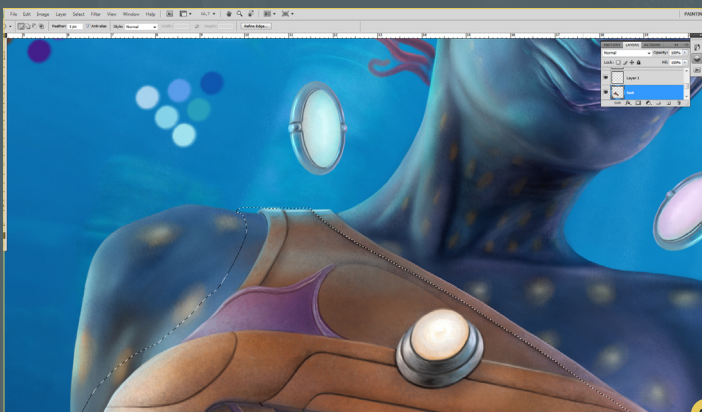
For the bra decoration I used a vector pattern (**Fig.11**). I copied it onto its own layer, just like I did for the forehead decoration, adjusting the length and shape to the surface I wanted to decorate. I used this layer as a Selection tool.

With the selection active (**Fig.12**) I went to Select > Modify > Border and gave it a value of 4 pixels. With this new selection active I copied and pasted from the underlying layer (the bra) and changed the layer property to Multiply. Then, with the selection of the base pattern active again, I went to Select > Modify > Contract and once again select 4 pixels as the value. Again I copied and pasted from the bra layer, this time giving it Color Dodge as a layer property. I then merged down all the new layers on the bra and I worked on the decoration with
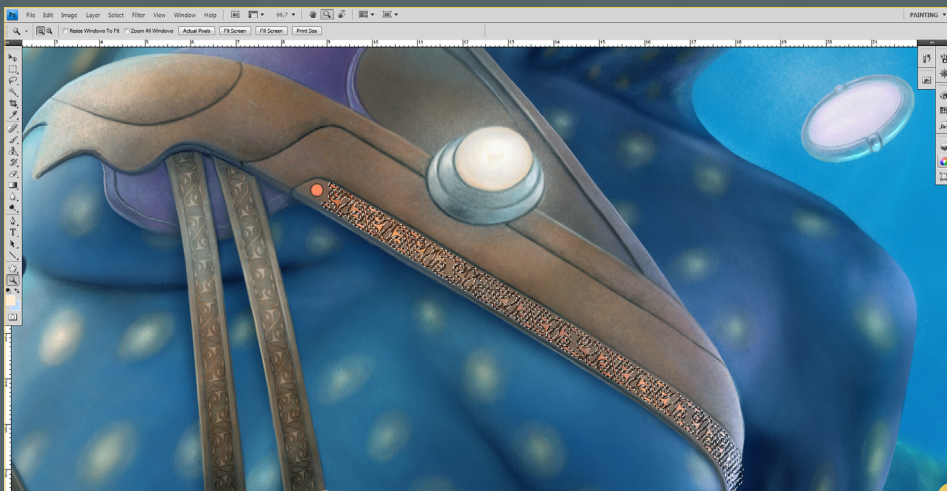
brush #6 and brush #3b to give the decoration the slightly irregular and hand-made look.

Using this procedure and experimenting with different layer properties it is possible to obtain different results (see, for instance, the two leather straps coming down from the bra; there I used Soft Light and Screen instead of Multiply and Color Dodge).

In my opinion at this point something was still missing. I wanted some light, natural elements to frame my alien to both guide the viewers' eyes and enhance a feeling of "otherness", so I painted in some kelp fronds and air bubbles (**Fig.13**). Then I added a subtle halo around the light sources (again, with a texturing brush, #3b, not a soft brush).

As a last touch I created a new layer above all other layers and filled it with the background blue, put it in Soft Light layer mode at 40% opacity and 40% fill, so that the alien would have a tinge of the background and so it didn't appear as if she was standing in front of an aquarium.

Just this wasn't enough, though, so I created a new layer and made a gradient: deep blue to transparent from bottom left to top right, and set it to Hard Light mode. I then created another layer and I painted in some plankton and matter particles with a speckled brush. This is the result (**Fig.14**).

Tiziano Baracchi

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:Volume 5

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Following on from the success of our first four books, we received yet another overwhelming response to our call for submissions for Digital Art Masters: Volume 5. Once again over 1,100 submissions made their way into the Digital Art Masters mailbox, proving to us that the series is becoming ever more popular with not only our readers, but artists around the world too!

From this massive number of incredible entries, the 3DTotal team began the difficult task of choosing approximately 300 images to take through to the next round. To help in the task, we enlisted the help of industry professionals Tim Warnock (matte painter), Till Nowak (3D artist) and John Kearney and Chung Wong (videogame artists - VooFoo Studios) to be our guest judges. These wonderful artists braved the headaches of a grueling judging process and helped the 3DTotal team to select the 50 stunning images that appear in this year's fantastic line-up.

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"Creating a good composition is what can make an illustration work or not, it's very important to take in consideration some aspects that will define the final work and its success or not."

Making Lightning
making of by Tiago da Silva

This month's making of has a really illustrative feel to it. Tiago da Silva shows us how he turns his very tidy line art into a dynamic digital painting based upon his concept of mankind controlling the weather.

Making of Making Lightning

Software Used: Photoshop

Introduction:

This work was produced for an art contest, so the image itself had to have a story behind it. The subject was the control of man over nature.

So here's a brief piece of text about the story:

In search for new energy sources, man gets bolder and bolder; machines replicates min-storms and control the power of the weather with the aim to harvesting the energy of lighting. Almost like a magician the scientist gazes upon his achievement. The amount of energy used to jumpstart the storm is enormous, so this machine works on nuclear energy to generate the initial storm, once it starts the storm, the storm is kept in motion by electro magnets, using a very small part of the energy harvested, making it almost self sustained.

Science is the new religion of our days, and we put ourselves in the hands of science, as science becomes more and more complicated sometimes it looks almost like magic, and what you can't explain becomes something unreal, maybe that's one of the reasons why people trust so much in science, when sometimes they know so little about what is going on.

I tried to paint the scientist like some sort of fortune teller, looking at the future of mankind in his magic orb.

Creating a good composition is what can make an illustration work or not, it's very important to take in consideration some aspects that will define the final work and its success or not. The creative process can have a set method and process but it also has to flexible and intuitive. Even before you start your sketch you must know what you're aiming for, the mood and the feel you want to transmit (**Fig.01**). Each one of us has learned and interiorized this
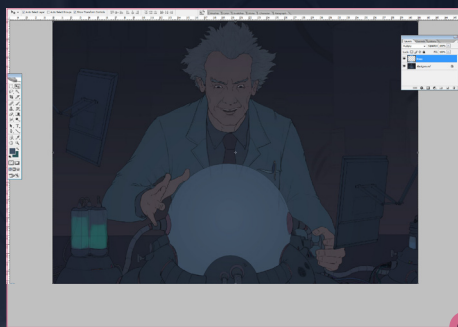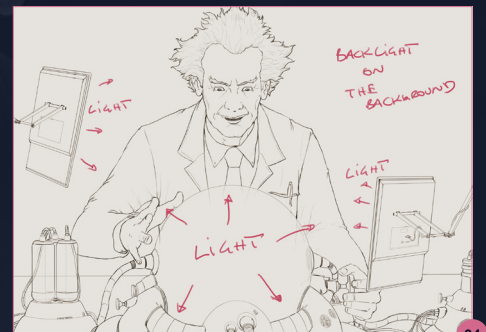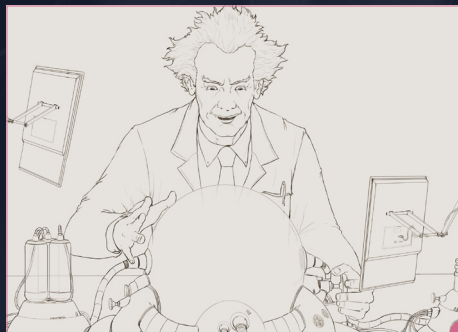
with the passing of the years. Our artwork is the culmination of study and hard work. It is something we gain with the passing years, in each new piece we produce. So practicing is the best way to develop all our skills.

Like I said it's very important to know what you're aiming for before you start, so, in this piece the look and mood I was aiming for was a close-up of the character, but also I wanted to show a lot of detail on the machinery. That's the reason why I worked in landscape. When I was happy with what I had done I drew over my pencil lines in Photoshop (**Fig.02 – 03**).

Before you actually start painting it is good to have a notion where your light source is coming from. When you don't have an obvious light source in the sketch it is up to you to decide where you want the light to come from (**Fig.04**).

With the light sources defined it's time to start painting. I create a new layer under the sketch and start laying down some washed colors to give myself the idea of what color scheme look for (**Fig.05**). I keep the light sources in mind as I move around the image painting in both the light and shadows.

Normally it's better to start with the background, especially if it has complex light sources and details because the overall look of the image work will depend on it, but here the character, besides occupying a large portion of the illustration, has the main light source beneath him so I've started with the character and the machine in the first plane (**Fig.06**).

For now I have just used some basic colors for the highlights. I already had in my mind that the energy light coming from the machine would
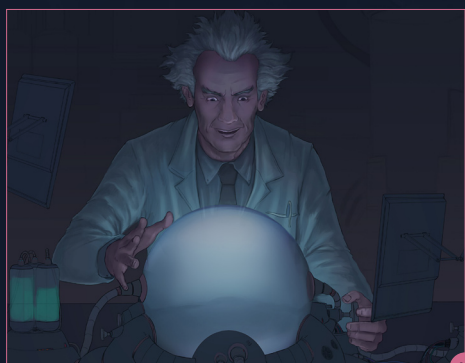
be a very light washed cyan. I put some in the character and also in the areas that will be lit with the energy. I also started working on the different pieces and colors of the machine.

I always paint directly into the same layer. I think it gives more of a feeling of a real painting, also the colors blend with each other much better. Starting with the shadows and using a custom brush (**Fig.07**) I start putting dark tones in the painting. The highlights from the skin will gradually become a very light washed cyan as they're closer to the energy light coming from the machine. I don't know if it's noticeable, but as I go along I start cleaning up and fixing some more rough brush strokes.

As I said I always paint on the same layer, but to have some control I separate different elements into masks that can be accessed in the cannels. As I move along I start adding some details here and there, sometimes the creation process becomes a little chaotic. I worked a lot in the

foreground before even doing anything on the background, normally I don't do things this way, but in this piece I was really looking to show good contrast so when you look at it your look don't get distracted with the background (**Fig.08**).

At this point I was already adding lots of detail to the machine and its surroundings (**Fig.09**). By adding more shadows and highlights the illustration is getting more definition, meanwhile the pencil traces gradually disappear. With the light coming from the machine well defined on the surroundings and on the

character at this point, it was time to begin the background (**Fig.10**). I knew I wanted some reddish tones, so I added the tones on the character since the background would have its own light sources. Again adding details as I go along I went back to the foreground and added more highlights. The center of the machine (the main light source) was left last, since I wasn't still sure how I would represent my idea on the illustration.

Background

This shouldn´t really be done at this stage, but like I said before, I wanted to focus the eye on

the foreground (**Fig.11**). I roughly painted the machinery in a very monochromatic way. The dark washed reds made a good contrast with the blues in front.

Details

Now you need to go back and do the final the details (**Fig.12**). At this point the illustration is almost complete.

The Machine

With the illustration in a very advanced stage of production, I finally painted the actual process of the machine. As I said in the intro, the machine is supposedly capable of generating a mini-storm and from it harvest the lightings energy (**Fig.13**). I painted some clouds and lighting. At this point I was pretty sure of what I had, but there were still some little details missing, like the light coming from the lighting through the mini-clouds. This effect would make all the difference in the final image.

Colors Adjustments

At this point the piece is almost complete… but the colors aren't quite right yet (**Fig.14**). With selections I adjusted the colors, defined the tones and started adding color. You can make changes using the color balance, curves, levels and selections.

Finishing the Image

This is where you look at your work and do the final touches, add more color, fish some details, I could go on and on, but at some point you see the finish line (**Fig.15**). For the last touch I used the filter un-sharpen mask on a new layer at 20% and it was done.

Tiago da Silva

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DIGITAL ART MASTERS
VOLUME 5

With the release of 3DTotal's book, *Digital Art Masters: Volume 5*, we have some exclusive chapters for you...

This is more than just an artwork book. Not only does it feature full-color, full-page images, but each artist has given a detailed description, in their own words, of the creation process behind each piece of published artwork. And they've done it especially for this book!

This month we feature:

"YAKUZA GIRL"

BY MICHAL LISOWSKI

The following shots of the "Yakuza Girl" book pages are featured here in full-resolution and can be read by zooming in...

© Michal Lisowski

YAKUZA GIRL
By Michal Lisowski
Job Title: Text
Software Used: Michal Lisowski

Introduction
Interesting stories make me want to paint. In searching for a source of inspiration I surfed the internet, not necessarily looking for strictly digital-painting websites. I hit on an idea for this piece after reading some articles about the Japanese mafia. Whilst exploring this theme I found a note about Shoko Tendo, which directly inspired me to create something about a woman under pressure within the mafia organization.

My main goal was to convey a dramatic scene and create something that forcefully tells the story and evokes emotion. I didn't focus on rendering a fully realistic scene but instead tried to concentrate on showing a dramatic situation, creating a good balance between the narrative and the technical aspects. In this article I'll try to show you all of the steps behind the creation of Yakuza Girl, from the original concept through to the final picture, although my working process might be difficult to explain as my workflow has been messy for many years now!

Sketch
I began the work directly after settling on the main theme and took a pencil and drew some basic sketches
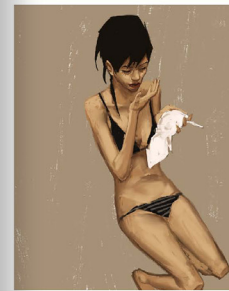
> MY MAIN GOAL WAS TO CONVEY A DRAMATIC SCENE AND CREATE SOMETHING THAT FORCEFULLY TELLS THE STORY AND EVOKES EMOTION

(Fig.01). I used some anatomy references from my library to build the body of a girl, searching for the right pose and composition. After that I took a break to get a broader view of my work and consider how I should present my idea clearly so that each viewer would understand the narrative.

Painting
The next stage involved scanning in selected drawings, correcting, mixing and finally starting to paint in Photoshop (Fig.02).

I started with a near monochrome scale, which later I intended to expand because at that stage color was not the determining factor with respect to the mood I was looking for. I would ask that you pay attention to the color palette of all my work in progress, as at each stage I was looking for the best color combination.

I began tattooing the main character with popular Japanese motifs, typified by members of the Yakuza. This detailing was very time consuming, with the tattoos fully painted with a Round brush on a separate layer. I spent some time finding the right colors for the outline of the tattoos, which was quite black but needed some color manipulation to appear realistic (Fig.03).

The next step was to create an interior. I decided that the background needed to tell us something more about the girl, but I remembered that it was only a background. I wanted to focus on her and not the surrounding area. Whilst drawing the environment I wanted to convey a style akin to speed painting. I prepared some texture brushes which helped to create a rough background. Some swift strokes here and there and it was done - my character was sitting on a chair in a bathroom (Fig.04).

After I had worked out the background I returned to the tattoos; spectacular body paint sparkling with color. With some extra details I arrived at the final color which was added on a different layer to the outlines (Fig.05).

The work on the main content of the picture was done, and so I could start to paint in the light and enrich the color palette. Adding things such as the cosmetics on the shelf and other elements helped to enhance the narrative and create more interest. Other examples include the tiles on the wall and floor, blood spots on the sink and the paper in the girl's hand.

Light & Depth building
I then had to build depth into the scene using the properties of light. Using a large Round brush with soft edges and a low opacity, I cut out the shape of the girl from the background. I placed this on a new layer directly behind the character. In addition to this I managed to achieve an interesting glow to the interior.
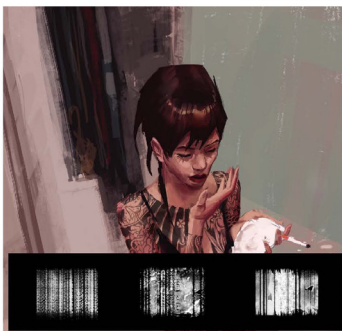
To create a reflection on the floor I merged all of the layers defining the background, duplicated it and then transformed it. To alter the perspective I used the Distort tool to achieve correctly aligned reflections (Fig.06). I then masked this reflection layer with the Gradient tool from the bottom up to gradually diminish the strength of the reflections. The next step was to set the layer opacity to 50% and change the Blending mode to Overlay.

Details & Corrections

Finally I added some details such as the blue shoe and towel to create a balance between all the areas of the composition. Furthermore I fixed the chair to make the perspective more accurate. I also decided to wash the girl's hair as I decided it would add to the drama and increase the impact (Fig.07).

At this point most of painting was complete. This was the time to add any last touches across the entire canvas, but without detracting from any of the picture's dynamism. Many parts of this piece still looked sketchy, but I felt this was appropriate. I took a break from my work and showed it to my friends. I wanted to hear their feedback and to know what they felt when they were looking at it. Other people often see things in a completely different way.
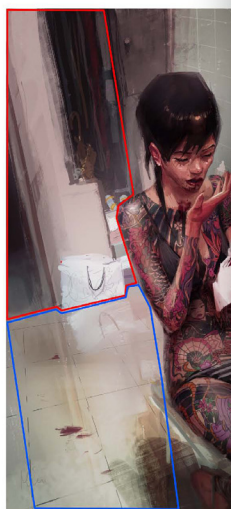
The last step consisted of making corrections and researching the best color scheme.

Conclusion

Whilst working on this piece my main goal was to create a palpable atmosphere and tell the story through digital brushes, as opposed to rendering it in the most accomplished way possible. The drawing was not too detailed as I thought this could have killed the piece. I did however obtain some new and helpful tricks and techniques along the way.

Recently for me, what I paint has become as important – if not more important – than how I paint. Your skill is only a tool so improve your skills and push yourself forward, but don't forget to look around you as inspiration is everywhere.

Artist Portfolio

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DIGITAL ART MASTERS

DIGITAL ART MASTERS
: VOLUME 4

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